

*a Century*  
to REMEMBER

TEACHING THE WORD OF GOD FOR 100 YEARS



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**A CENTURY TO REMEMBER:  
TEACHING THE WORD OF GOD FOR 100 YEARS**

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**EDITED BY HOMER HEATER, JR., PH.D.**

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This volume, as were the first 100 years of WBC/CBS, is dedicated to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who, through His grace and mercy, has used this institution, to change hearts and lives, and to show the world His love.



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# A CENTURY TO REMEMBER: TEACHING THE WORD OF GOD FOR 100 YEARS

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## PREFACE

HISTORY IS NOT a popular subject today, but if we are going to chart the future, we must know how we arrived where we are. The history of Washington Bible College and Capital Bible Seminary is one of God's grace in using weak human instruments to equip world changers to think biblically, focus globally, and serve God effectively. The testimonies in this book from people of different generations and vocations show that the school has indeed been successful in its mission.

The school had very modest beginnings as a faithful woman began Bible studies in her home at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today we have a school that reaches almost a thousand students through the Adult Education program (now named Equip Institute), the Bible College, and the Seminary. We have graduates serving on every continent and alumni from dozens of countries who have returned to reach their own people for Christ.

The man most responsible for Washington Bible College and Capital Bible Seminary is George Miles, who spent over 40 years in the leadership role. He affected thousands of lives through his teaching, but, most of all, through his life. David Shive, married to a daughter of one of Dr. Miles' best friends, wrote the section on the life of George Miles.

The section on the history of the school was written by Homer Dowdy, a well known author in Christian circles. Shortly after submitting the manuscript, he died while jogging and went to be with his Lord. We are grateful for his contribution to this book. Reen Waterman (CBS '02) edited most of the material. We appreciate the many hours he devoted to this process.

A capable faculty is obviously a prerequisite to good education. We are pleased with our faculties in all three divisions of the school. Five of them wrote articles to show the importance of the Bible in the heart while the testimonies of our alumni demonstrate the heart of service.

As we move into the second century of Bible instruction and ministry preparation and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century of the Christian era, there is a strong aura of fear and uncertainty. Now as never before, we need the strong assurance that comes from the “anchor for the soul, firm and secure” that God has given us through His word.

Our prayer is that this volume will provide encouragement and hope to Christians everywhere, but especially to our alumni and friends who have stood by the school in good times and bad.

Dr. Homer Heater, Jr.  
President (1994-2005)



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# PART ONE: THE HISTORY

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## A HISTORY OF WASHINGTON BIBLE COLLEGE

*by Homer Dowdy*

IN WASHINGTON, D. C., where global influence originates, evangelical Christianity has its own thrust. Policies crafted by Presidents and Congresses impact the world, at times for the present, sometimes for years. Graduates of Washington Bible College (WBC) and Capital Bible Seminary (CBS) have carried the Good News to the world, and affected countless lives for eternity. International students have swelled their ranks by coming for biblical education and returning home to share the word of God with their fellow countrymen.

The beginning of the ministry of WBC/CBS, a ministry which has had global impact, was local. A century ago, Mrs. Rice I. Steele began an unassuming effort to help believers of her day to better know the Bible and its Author, so that they might meet needs in their daily living. Shortly into the Twentieth Century, God must have been in the midst of that handful of small groups, meeting in Washington homes and offices to study the Bible, so the unpretentious beginning is not to be discounted. God was also there when concerned Christians reached out to the city's Jewish population with news of the Messiah and to inquirers eager to know God's plan for the ages.

He was also present when evening Bible classes attracted large numbers of government workers and when first an evening school and then day sessions formalized these studies into a recognizable Bible institute. He was there in the purchase and use of row houses on Rhode Island and Vermont Avenues to house those classes. He prepared the way for Washington Bible College to move from those crowded facilities to a spacious campus in a Maryland suburb.

One hundred years after those first gatherings, and following those years of development, God is still present. What has developed, despite what some might have thought impossible, is a Bible college and a theological seminary with significant enrollments, important accreditation, broad curricula, and an expanding campus.

### THREE FOUNDATIONS

Bible studies, beginning in 1902, formed the first foundation. From the initial homes and churches where they met, the classes moved over the next decade to the YMCA, other homes and then to a number of office buildings. Early in the 1920s, Dr. Arthur R. Kuldell, ardent for Jewish evangelism, joined the group, and in 1924 he and Dr. M. E. Miller, Irwin B. Linton and Rev. S. L. Brumbaugh established the Bible Institute of Washington at 1316 Vermont Avenue, in northwest Washington, DC.

The second foundation was the Cottage Bible Institute, organized in 1917 by Edward W. Collamore, a government employee and lay member of Wallace Memorial Presbyterian Church. A dedicated student of the Bible himself, Collamore urged others to delve into God's Word. Under the aegis of Home Bible Study Courses, which proclaimed a motto, *Knowledge, Prayer, Service*, and exhibited the emblem, *The Bible in the Heart – the Heart of Service*, hundreds enrolled for personal study. He incorporated his program in 1921 as the American Home Bible Institute. A Board of Directors oversaw the work, Bible teachers were engaged to write courses, and three of Collamore's assistants continued in the work for decades – one of them for fifty years.

The third foundation began in 1925 when Rev. C. W. Oyer moved from Fort Wayne Bible College to become pastor of Washington's Open Door Church and superintendent of the Bible Institute of Washington. Five years later he opened the Washington School of the Bible in his church at 307 D Street, NW, especially attracting young government staffers, men, and women alike. A prominent interest was Bible prophecy, particularly a monthly prophetic conference that brought to the city nationally known teachers in this field.

The merger of these three parallel institutions did not occur without much vision, prayer and unselfish surrender of established territories and prerogatives. The first to merge were the American Home Bible Institute and the Washington School of the Bible, in September of 1938, with five directors from the board of each group elected to govern the new Washington Bible Institute. The Certificate of Incorporation stated the organization's mission:

"The purpose of this corporation is for training Christian men and women for missionary, pastoral, Bible teaching and other

Christian service; to do general Bible teaching and evangelistic work, to encourage systematic Bible study by groups of persons assembled for that purpose; to prepare, publish and conduct correspondence courses; to issue certificates and diplomas, to print and circulate tracts and other literature pertaining to the work of the corporation; to secure gifts, bequests and legacies of any and all kinds; to buy, hold, sell and transform property, both real and personal, for the purpose of carrying on the work of the corporation as herein before set forth."

## FROM THREE, ONE

The institute was divided into six departments: resident school, correspondence school, evangelism, books, prayer and stewardship. Classes were held at the Open Door Church and in a row house at 1509 Rhode Island Avenue, NW. Pastor Oyer, coming from the Washington School of the Bible, became the merger's first chairman of the Board of Trustees. George A. Miles, president of the American Home Bible Institute for the three previous years, was named interim president of the new school.

It was the intention all along that the Bible Institute of Washington would complete the three-way merger, but this did not happen for another two years. George Miles voiced the logic of combining the schools:

Three Bible schools, each with a particular emphasis in training, could not long remain independent of each other in the same city when they held the same high regard for the Bible... The Word of God is the one essential for unity among God's people.

As a first step, classes and faculty intermingled informally starting in September of 1938. Despite confusion over the similarity of names and the Bible Institute of Washington's concern over the sale of its Vermont Avenue property, eventual consolidation was never questioned, and what differences did exist were yielded to prayer and friendly negotiation. Still, the two sides were not completely together. "Merge, or call it off," became the dominant sentiment in February of 1940, with the merger becoming finalized on July 30 of that year.

With the final merger, all teaching was confined to evenings, with 20 classes enrolling 124 students, up from 90 the previous year. The faculty numbered 16, most of them pastors. The enrollment represented 38 Washington area churches, among them Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, United Presbyterian and Brethren. An adjunct to scheduled classes was the "Popular Bible Class," featuring out-of-town teachers, no doubt a factor in drawing large numbers of the general public,

but especially Sunday school teachers. Correspondence courses were another offering. They benefited from Edward Collamore's earlier program of correspondence study, which granted certificates for each completed course, ranging from six to 56 hours, and awarded diplomas after 432 credit hours.

Each of the three schools could point to key persons in the movement to bring a broader Christian education to the area. A. R. Kuldell was one such person for the Bible Institute of Washington. He served as its Dean and instructor, and was responsible for its management and growth for many years. Following him was Irwin H. Linton (whose father, Irwin B. Linton, had been a Bible Institute of Washington founder), who was a lawyer whose cases brought him before the U. S. Supreme Court. Like Kuldell, he was active in Jewish evangelism, and for 25 years served as president of the American Board of Missions to the Jews.

Pastor Oyer, organizer of the Washington School of the Bible, was another key figure in the institute. He had attended a Bible school in Ohio, and was an enthusiastic student all his life. Before moving to Washington, he held a pastorate in Ohio, did Jewish evangelism in Chicago and served the Fort Wayne Bible Institute as superintendent. He filled the post of Board Chairman of Washington Bible Institute until his death in 1951.

Glenn W. Wagner and George A. Miles were among the men of the American Home Bible Institute who had a significant impact on the area, and who would become presidents of the school. Undoubtedly, something of the astuteness of Edward Collamore, founder of AHBI, carried over to the merged school, although he died almost a decade before it came into being.

These men and their colleagues on the Board of Trustees fully agreed on biblical doctrine. They determined that to serve on the Board, one must give complete allegiance to the adopted doctrinal statement. Another requirement was that no more than a third of the trustees were to be from the same denomination. Their vision was to be an open door to all who wished to study the Bible, without emphasis on a particular denomination.

The Board consisted of Washington pastors and leading Christian businessmen. The faculty was drawn from clergy and laymen who were proficient in their areas of biblical expertise. Washington Bible Institute (WBI) would not attempt to provide liberal arts education; its singular purpose was to teach the Bible. Subjects other than biblical were offered only if they aided the goal of reaching the world for Christ.

One of the Institute's departments was "Prayer." It ranked with the school's other elements and prayer was recognized as basic to all undertakings. Rev. Edward E. Stelling was appointed prayer steward. A prayer warrior himself and a student of biblical prayer, he carried on a role created by Edward Collamore at the American Home Bible Institute. For the next forty years Stelling would issue a monthly prayer letter presenting specific requests and a commentary on prayer. It went to

all WBI “stewards.” The Board held monthly prayer sessions, and annual days of prayer were conducted for the entire institute family.

Glenn W. Wagner was a recent graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary when the Board chose him as the first full-time president of WBI. He protested that his focus was more on evangelism than academia. He was known in Washington evangelical circles for his youth rallies, tent campaigns, radio broadcasts and evangelistic boat cruises. He consented to serve, at no stated salary and was paid \$100 for his first month’s work. During his tenure, he laid foundations for the school’s future growth. He assured everyone he met that, “Nothing is impossible if God is in it.”

Wagner continued doing what he did best, evangelizing young people. He used a variety of creative means to spread his message: Saturday night city-wide Youth Rallies, live broadcasts, cruises on the Potomac River with Christian music and a message, or at a church service in which Wagner was the guest speaker. Many young people became Christians because of his efforts, and some even enrolled in the school.

Students attended evening classes to prepare for the ministry, missions, or for teaching the Word of God. They chose from among four majors: Pastoral, Missions, Sacred Music and Christian Education. Each category required 50 semester hours of Bible and theology, equaling or surpassing the Bible content of five Bible institutes, which had been studied for comparative purposes.

Beyond classroom learning, students were required to be involved in maintenance and ministry. They went out weekly to the streets, the prisons and the public places of Washington to distribute Gospel tracts and to share their faith with people they met. Others were members of Gospel teams in Sunday church services, taught Bible studies, or sang in the touring choir. Other forms of work claimed each student. All were required to give five hours a week in the maintenance of the row-homes-turned-classrooms and for other operating needs. Eugene A. Scheele, perhaps unmatched in the institute’s history as a soul winner organized this “practical work.” As a young government structural engineer, George Miles, had come to the Lord through his personal evangelism.

In 1944, in the midst of World War II, Wagner resigned to join the Pocket Testament League. His mission was the distribution of Bibles to American servicemen, and he spearheaded the effort on four continents. George Miles followed Wagner as president. While building structures for the federal government, he had served as president of the American Home Bible Institute and currently was a WBI Board member and treasurer and a part-time member of the faculty. He was a diligent personal testimony to his faith, and was noted for being sensitive to people’s needs. He had a marked ability to involve believers in the work of the Lord. He himself was willing to work at any task, often the menial and despised. He held to three unchangeable principles: 1) People apart from Jesus Christ have no hope, 2)



Education, especially Bible education, is important, 3) Prayer is vital. You give a matter your all, yet the accomplishment is the work of God.

Under both the retiring and the new president, the curriculum and enrollments grew. A three-year course of study began in 1946. In 1947, a Day School was opened with 18 students and the first full-time faculty. While the Evening School had been the foundation for all advances, Miles pushed hard for the day school. He felt its greater demands on students were needed to prepare them for full-time ministry. Twelve diplomas were awarded in 1949 to the first graduating class, giving the Washington Bible Institute greater validity.

## A TIME TO GROW

The Vermont Avenue property and the Open Door Church provided meeting space for classes until the student body outgrew them, spilling over into a row house owned by the institute on Rhode Island Avenue. Space was still cramped, however, and purchases on Rhode Island made room for more classes, a library and a dormitory for 50 students. Further purchases were made, providing relief from overcrowding. When some attempted purchases fell through, the administration rented 20 apartments in the neighborhood to house more students.

Finances were a continuing problem, and with fiscal resources low, often the whole WBI family was called to prayer. If ever an institution was built on short reserves and strong trust in God's timely provision, Washington Bible Institute certainly was. Much of the income came from student tuition. Larger enrollments appeared to hold an answer to fiscal problems. But with all the available buildings in the vicinity already purchased, there just was not enough room to grow. The question was raised, "Should the school sell its properties and move to a less confined area?" First one, then another location presented itself, but none seemed right.

Early in 1956, the institute was renamed Washington Bible College (WBC), reflecting a broadened curriculum within the original purpose of being Bible-centered, and a fourth year of study was added. The College could not be contained in an array of row houses in inner Washington. The creation in 1958 of a three-year graduate school, Capital Bible Seminary, increased the motivation to find a new location.

George Miles was not a seminary graduate. Nevertheless, he was deeply committed to the idea of advanced training in the exegesis of the Scripture through Hebrew and Greek. He was an ardent fan of the Seminary from its inception. The Seminary became a natural follow-on for the Bible College and also drew degree holders from colleges and universities across the country. Its academic program eventually culminated in Master of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees. From the start it proclaimed a pre-millennial stance, and declared the Bible to be

its supreme subject for study. Cramped for space as it was, the College squeezed the Seminary into its classrooms.

Ten years later the issue of relocation was resolved. A financial crisis from a real estate problem in the city and a change in education policy caused the Salvatorian Fathers and Brothers to close their school in Lanham and place it for sale. Available were 63 acres, some of it majestically wooded, and a spacious three-story building with chapel, numerous offices, meeting rooms and residence for 50 people. Originally, a large house, Magnolia Springs, occupied the property, and from its springs, water was bottled and shipped for medicinal purposes. The Catholics bought the estate in 1935, and in 1940 built the imposing stone building that for years dominated the scene.

Before accepting WBC's offer of \$1,200,000, the sellers subdivided off two acres for the local fire department. Bonds were sold, miscellaneous improvements were made to the new property by donated labor and all legal and financial details were completed for a final settlement of the purchase on June 30, 1969. Sale of the Rhode Island Avenue property had been figured into the financing, which did not happen until five years after the move. The delay in selling, however, permitted the Seminary to remain for some time in town, the Evening School to continue as usual and for some students to be housed at the old site and bused to the new campus for classes.

A few years earlier it would have been unthinkable for the College to consider this. But slowly raising funds for additional facilities on Rhode Island Avenue and gaining equity in each of them had lifted its economic standing to where a major mortgage and other financial arrangements were possible.

Dedication of the new Lanham campus brought WBC's first president back for the weeklong celebration. Students, faculty and trustees joined one thousand friends of the College on the lawn on the sunny Sunday afternoon of September 28, 1969, to hear Glenn Wagner re-emphasize WBC's purpose. "The nation needs this Lanham campus," he said. "We need it and God needs it. Each student here is a potential missionary. The seed is the Word of God, and without the seed there will be no crop... The greatest need in the world is to go to those who have yet to hear and this is why we have to have this College."

Despite the 53,000 square feet in the campus building, it was evident more space for classes and student housing would soon be needed. Here on this broad campus there was ample room to expand, when it could be afforded. The overcrowded situation tightened more when the students from the city were moved on campus, the change necessary to overcome difficulties in the commuting arrangement. Plans were drawn up for a dormitory. Classroom expansion, however, took precedence. The first stage of the Irwin H. Linton Classroom Building provided four classrooms and six music studios, a print shop and a mailroom.

Over time, other buildings were built. In 1972, maintenance facilities were moved out of Linton Hall, permitting the Seminary to resettle from the city to the suburban campus. In that same year, ground was broken for a dormitory. It bore the name of Steiner Memorial, honoring the memory of Peter Steiner, the student body's president-elect who had been killed in an automobile accident the year before. The maintenance department gained its own building in 1974, releasing space in the main building for the campus bookstore, which had begun serving the Christian public as well as the College and Seminary family. A new residence hall, named after Edward Collamore, housed twelve student efficiencies and four apartments.

Before the College moved to Lanham in 1969, there were 250 students. Within six years, enrollments in the College and Seminary doubled. But a larger faculty was required. Many of the teachers were part-time, holding other teaching posts or pastorates. Generally, before one was invited to the faculty he had taught in higher education for seven or eight years. Their faithfulness in demonstrating a vital spiritual life was as important as their teaching skills.

Care of the teachers was a serious concern of the trustees. Whenever possible they raised salaries, granted financial aid to those seeking graduate degrees, and provided other "perks." One such benefit was the purchase of almost seven acres near the campus, which were sub-divided into lots and sold at modest prices to faculty and staff members for home sites.

Under President Miles the faculty increased in quality and quantity. The post of academic Dean of the College was held by a succession of capable educators, Karl E. Keefer, Jr., Douglas B. MacCorkle, Wendell G. Johnston, Robert O. Woodburn and James S. Schuppe; and of the Seminary, Raymond Saxe, John H. Mulholland and Homer Heater, Jr. Of these, Dr. MacCorkle and Dr. Johnston accepted calls to the presidency of other Bible colleges, and Dr. Heater eventually would become president of WBC and CBS. Other Deans with proven abilities would follow them, Charles Dyer, Neil Holliker, Louis Rittweger, Daven Kari, and Christine Doerfler for the College, and Kenneth Barker, Todd Beall, Thomas Edgar and George Harton for the Seminary.

## **BUILDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Over the years many WBC students have pursued Bible study through the school's adult education, correspondence or extension programs (now called The EQUIP Institute). Non-campus study has been offered in Richmond and Norfolk, Virginia; Hagerstown and Baltimore, Maryland, and other centers. Enrollment in these offerings varied annually. Enrollment in the campus program stayed around three hundred and in the Seminary around one hundred until 1974, when the

College broke the 400-student mark for the first time, with 256 men and 158 women.

Important to enrollment was the schools' standing with accrediting agencies. While still housed in the Rhode Island Avenue buildings, Washington Bible College was authorized by the District of Columbia Board of Higher Education to grant Bachelor of Divinity degrees. The American Association of Bible Colleges gave full accreditation to the College the following year. After the move to Lanham, the District board agreed to continue WBC's authority to grant degrees until Maryland gave accreditation, a decision reciprocated by that state's Board for Higher Education.

Many churches in the Washington area looked on WBC as a valuable adjunct to their own ministries. Year after year, Christians flocked to the school's conferences, including those for young people, with young people coming from several East Coast states, and to gatherings for missions and Bible exposition. For several years an oratorical contest, featuring promising young preachers, the Founder's Day banquet, the Spring banquet and later a Christmas banquet drew enthusiastic participation.

Radio was another means of communicating the Gospel and the school to the public. Music, testimonies and Bible studies were components of different programs over different stations throughout the years.

Women played a prominent role in the development of the College. Although there were no women on the original Board of Trustees – this came later – they faithfully reinforced the administration from the start. Three began their service with the American Home Bible Institute and continued as the College progressed. Mary A. Hervey retired as registrar of the Evening School in 1955. Ethel Vance remained an instructor until 1956. Lena B. Lobaugh managed the College bookstore until 1967. Among them, they had served 106 years. A campus reading room was dedicated in appreciation of their outstanding service.

Effie Collamore assisted the Music Department for many years as an instructor in piano and organ. Ruth Esther Miles worked as her husband's secretary in the president's office until her death in 1980. Eleanor Bergsten retired after 27 years as secretary to the Academic Dean and Administrative Assistant to three College presidents. For a long time, a Women's Auxiliary contributed practical help to the schools with prayer support and promotion and by supplying little necessities.

The percentage of African-American students grew significantly, somewhat reflecting the ethnic makeup of Prince George's County, the location of the Lanham campus. This called for a commitment to minority faculty members. Dr. Bernard Fuller, a WBC and Dallas graduate, was named chairman of a new Urban Ministries Department in 1989. Feedback from African-American churches was sought and welcomed as means to improve the school's effort in diversity and to guide

their strategic planning. For many young African American Christians, it was the school of choice. Minority enrollment at WBC reached 45 per cent.

## PRESIDENTIAL HISTORY

George Miles workload multiplied when he left his volunteer positions and became president in 1944. Yet, he lost none of his passion to witness to the non-Christians he met and to challenge believers. His interests were sweeping. He memorized Scripture passages, often while walking instead of driving or riding to a destination. Having built structures for the federal government, he maintained his great interest in architecture and construction, even designing most of the new buildings on the Lanham campus. He loved music and saw to it that the Music Department received its fair say in College deliberations and decisions. He had played baseball in his youth and still was a loyal fan in all sports. Always hospitable, he issued a habitual invitation to those that he met: "Come on in and have a bite to eat."

Miles was forward-looking. He presented a 50-year plan to the trustees. He was aware, however, that those distant goals might never be reached if wayward steps *en route* are condoned. In a commencement address, he reminded his audience of schools that had their origins firmly in the Bible as the bedrock of knowledge but were famous today for their secular learning.

He had seen too many pastors come from colleges with much learning but little heart to care for their sheep. Unprepared for the task, after 18 months they quit. WBC, he admonished once again, must build character and purpose in its students. They must be counseled and encouraged. The job was to produce shepherds.

Three new buildings were built toward the end of Miles' tenure. A three-story Seminary building gave the graduate school needed space and autonomy with room for 200 students. The new quarters contributed to the Seminary, both as a draw for students and for the efficiency it provided. The second building was a combination auditorium and gymnasium. Besides the 2,000-seat arena, the building contained recreation, fitness and game areas, locker rooms, classrooms, offices and kitchen. It was dedicated to Glenn Wagner, not only for his ability in athletics as a young man and for being a lifelong sports enthusiast, but also for his character and memorable services to the College. A student center in the Wagner Building was dedicated to the memory of Ruth E. Miles who, in the eulogy, was cited for her constant deep concern for staff, faculty and students alike. The third building was a two-story addition to the library in 1980.

George Miles, after 42 years with Washington Bible College and Capital Bible Seminary, retired on May 20, 1984, and was appointed President Emeritus. President Ronald Reagan sent a letter congratulating him on tenure that was longer



than that of the current president of any higher education institution in the United States. In 1994, the main campus building was given his name.

A wide search was made for Miles' successor, and Dr. Harry E. Fletcher became the unanimous choice of the search committee. Harry Fletcher became a Christian in 1965, two years before entering Washington Bible College. After graduating four years later he enrolled in Capital Bible Seminary and completed his study there in 1971. For three years he served as a jail chaplain with the Good News Jail and Prison Ministry and then pastored churches until his call to return to WBC/CBS. From his last pastorate, York Gospel Center in York, Pennsylvania, more students entered WBC than from any other one church.

Like his predecessor, Dr. Fletcher was very committed to personal evangelism and missions. Under his direction, the school began an annual joint College and Seminary missions conference, which continues to this day. An experienced veteran missionary, Dr. Don Hillis, was added to the WBC/CBS staff. The Seminary instituted a new M.A. program with a missions emphasis during his tenure.

Dr. Fletcher was continually an optimist, believing that enrollment and giving would increase to support new programs and initiatives. However, for various reasons, both enrollment and financial support declined during the latter portion of his tenure, and the indebtedness of the school continued to rise to unhealthy levels.

In the spring of 1991, Dr. Fletcher resigned, and the Board named John A. Sproule as the interim president. Dr. Sproule had been professor of New Testament in the Seminary since 1986. His university degree was in electrical engineering and he had worked for General Motors Corporation until he felt called to attend Dallas Theological Seminary. Earning a degree there, he became Dean and a professor at Southeastern Bible College in Birmingham, Alabama, and later moved to Grace Theological Seminary in Indiana to become chairman of its Department of New Testament. Grace awarded him the degree of Doctor of Theology.

After serving a year as interim, Dr. Sproule was named the president in June of 1992. At his inauguration as president in July of 1992, Dr. Sproule listed a number of goals to move the College and Seminary forward. These included keeping to the historic mission, eliminating debt, increasing public recognition, improving faculty salaries and setting up a pension system, maintaining accreditation, promoting spiritual development of students, hiring more minority faculty and accepting new ideas as readily as tradition.

"By God's grace," he said, "I commit myself totally to these goals." However, whatever progress might be made under his leadership would be limited to two more years. He believed his health would not permit him to serve any longer time (he had suffered a heart attack in 1990).

Although the Seminary enrollment had risen slightly during the recent tough times and the period following, the number of WBC students dropped to the low-

est level in ten years, but then slightly rebounded. The debt had ballooned under the previous administration and deferred maintenance mounted. Now, as a backwash from those years, serious consideration was given to selling the campus.

Negotiations were begun with a Washington church to sell to its congregation all of the campus but 15 acres. WBC/CBS would use the money from its sale to pay off debts and to build a new but reduced facility on the land to be retained. The sale did not go through, however, as both parties felt that for the price there was too little value to proceed.

The decision not to sell the property was welcomed by the new president in 1994. It was a position Dr. Homer Heater had advocated before his appointment. He emphasized steps the institution had taken under Sproule's administration to improve its situation: reduction of debt, increased enrollment, students drawn from throughout the East Coast, an expanding campus—in short, new confidence under President Sproule. He was convinced that our responsibility lay in Prince George's County, and his desire was to re-establish a resident campus.

The relationship of Homer Heater with WBC and CBS already had touched four decades. His first encounter was as a student in the Adult Education program. At one time or another he held almost every student leadership position. After graduation in 1959, he was named assistant registrar, then registrar and vice-president of the alumni association. He began teaching in 1962, first the History of Civilization and then Greek and New Testament, while at the same time he pastored a church in Derwood, Maryland. He was a member of the first CBS graduating class in 1964. He then took a leave of absence and in that study time earned a doctorate of philosophy. Returning to CBS in 1969, Dr. Heater taught Hebrew, then was named Dean of the Seminary. He served in this post until he left to join the faculty of Dallas Seminary in 1985. He was back at WBC in 1993 to again become Dean of the Seminary, and became president of the College and Seminary on August 1, 1994.

For Homer Heater, whose affiliation with WBC/CBS was nearing 50 years, days and evenings alike were filled with official duty. Teaching evenings, preaching every Sunday, speaking at conferences, and conducting seminars, overseas travel and appearances, board meetings, visiting with alumni and donors, meeting with accrediting agencies — these were some of his pressing activities.

The corner had been turned, and an institution which had weathered difficult times was now on the road to recovery. Heater believed WBC and CBS were on the verge of a breakout, that the schools would become strong over the next several years. "God," he said, "is going to do something great." The goals he presented to the trustees, lately renamed directors, were simply three: financial stability, academic excellence, and spiritual strength.

Competent people were placed in key positions. New hires strengthened faculty. Maintenance crews re-roofed and renovated buildings. They replaced plumb-

ing, ceilings, carpets and insulation. Accreditation was pursued, with progress made. The Seminary computers were upgraded, aided by a sizeable grant from the Eli Lilly Foundation. Donations from churches and individuals increased and a capital fund campaign was begun. Enrollments started to grow. Debt was pared. The outlook definitely had improved.

Dr. Heater did not look upon the recent valley experience as completely negative, but was mindful of the lesson it taught. In times of caustic stress, when the outcome remains uncertain, he pointed out, organizations, like people, are forced back to their first principles. In contrast, the luxury of abundance often tempts to reckless wanderings. He was determined to push the College and Seminary into the future, not fearing to take risks at times, but to guard the institution entrusted to him.

## **A SNAPSHOT OF THE CENTENNIAL YEAR**

A major church partnership occurred in August of 2001. McLean Bible Church dedicated 3,000 square feet of its new church facility in McLean, Virginia, to the academic program of Capital Bible Seminary. By spring of 2002, 70 students were attending five classes. It was hoped that in two years Virginia residents could take their entire Seminary program in Virginia. Much of the rapid progress made in Virginia was due in large measure to the cooperation given freely by Lon Solomon, McLean Bible's pastor and himself a graduate and one-time professor of CBS.

Students at the Virginia center are commuters. A large percentage of those at the Lanham campus live in the dormitories or in nearby private homes. Periodically, surveys reveal interesting facts about the student body. One analysis disclosed that more than one third of the Seminary students were Washington Bible College graduates. Slightly more than half were from Bible colleges and Christian liberal arts colleges, the rest from secular schools. Records showed students coming from 23 states and the District of Columbia and from India, Iraq, Korea, China, Japan, Hispanic countries and Africa.

About 80 percent of those entering the College intended to pursue full-time Christian service. A breakdown of enrollment by academic programs showed most students planned to complete four years of study and earn the Bachelor of Arts degree, while only a small number sought a two-year associate of arts. Pastoral, counseling and youth ministries led the course tracks, with music, teacher preparation, urban ministries and Christian education drawing significant numbers.

In 2002, enrollment in the College reached 331; in the Seminary, 270, and in adult education, 220. Enrollment growth occurred for the tenth consecutive year. A long-range goal of 600 for the College, 400 for the Seminary and 500 in extension classes was established.

Personal contacts with alumni, now numbering 3,500, and current students have over the years been important means by which young people were directed to the College or Seminary. Pastors were another source. The weekend ministries of faculty members have drawn hundreds to the school over the years. A visit to the campus convinced others that here was their place of study.

In recent years, a relaxed dress code and a downplay of legalistic conduct has marked the campus, with emphasis on being “for” rather than “against.” Yet, the prevailing attitude in the student body has seemed no less determined than in the past. Generally, today’s student knows what he or she wants in four or more years of higher education.

Doctrine was important to the founders of Washington Bible College. They believed it good to emphasize the incontrovertible basics of the Christian faith and to keep silent, or nearly silent, on matters more open to interpretation. For example, no position was taken on the form of baptism. Speaking in tongues and physical healing, as related in the Book of Acts, were looked on as gifts of the Holy Spirit, but temporary gifts to the Early Church. The inerrancy of the Bible, the fallen state of man, the Virgin Birth, Christ’s atoning death on the cross for sin, the Spirit-filled life of the believer, the coming again of Christ for his Church – these were the essence of Christian faith. This was the doctrine taught in the classroom and it was to this doctrine that, hopefully, every graduate pledged his lifetime commitment.

Yet the College and Seminary wanted to minister to the broader church. Consequently, students were allowed to attend both schools even though they did not agree entirely with the doctrinal statement. This has resulted in a richer student body with the attendant difficulties of teaching and learning together in an environment where all do not agree. This enlarged view of doctrine, without losing its inner core, corresponded to a widened curriculum, but again without sidelining the premier Textbook. Stated year after year, the objective remained Bible training, not liberal arts. But the world of 2002 was not the same as the society of 1902, when Mrs. Steele began her Bible studies. There came in that century not only air travel, instant messaging and nuclear power, but daycare, moral upheaval and repudiation of God. The Gospel as remedy remained the same, but often its productive delivery depended on the knowledge gained by the training of the one seeking to supply the answer.

Many graduates from the College and Seminary have spent their lives in productive ministry but not in full-time vocational service. The curriculum at the College includes music, education, and other programs of study that lend themselves to a committed Christian life in a secular vocation. The origins of Washington Bible College as primarily lay institute to enhance the biblical competency of Christians in a secular society continue to be manifest in a student body that wants

to learn God's Word and will, but who may not become pastors or missionaries in the formal sense.

Areas of study preparing the student for the pastorate, missions, church music or Christian education remain in demand in 2002. As the millennium closed and new problems could be predicted for the next, counseling as a Christian vocation loomed large. Both the College and the Seminary upgraded their resources to satisfy the demand. Ministry expanded beyond pulpit ministry. A confidential conversation might work where a sermon would not. Academic tracks were developed to equip College and Seminary graduates for relevant service to the communities to which they would go. Courses were offered for ministries among youth (including camping and recreation specialties), inner-city intervention, teaching skills, fine arts appreciation, and inter-cultural understanding. A course in computer techniques gained much applause. Regardless of where and with whom they would serve, students saw computers as an essential ministry tool.

"Here at WBC and CBS," Dr. Heater once commented, "our responsibility is to send forth world citizens, men and women who by their training are equipped to interact with society, wherever or in whatever form it exists."

Why a Bible college today? Bible colleges have long been criticized by the secular world as narrow-minded, old-fashioned, and anti-denominational. Ecumenism may be lauded on a high level, but not as exemplified by the independent Bible colleges through cooperation with many church affiliations and no restrictive allegiance to one.

Dr. Heater once pointed out that 80 percent of missionary volunteers came from Bible institutes and colleges. Has there been a parallel between fewer new missionaries in recent years and the replacement at a number of Bible schools of a Bible core by the liberal arts? He and faculty members have kept up the school's personal contact with its graduates on the mission fields of the world. A "best-ever" missions conference in 2002 and a revised missions curriculum, certain to draw more interest, were hopeful boosts to global evangelism. 10% of the CBS student body were preparing for foreign missions.

The purpose of WBC, stated forcefully and succinctly at the time of the merger of the three preceding schools, was publicly reiterated in more recent years by a similar expression of commitment:

Washington Bible College/Capital Bible Seminary exists as an evangelical Christian, multi-denominational, and multi-ethnic educational community dedicated to preparing men and women for local and worldwide service to God and humanity. College and Seminary programs equip students with a biblical worldview and prepare them for effective vocational service and lay ministry. The educational climate emphasizes biblical content and appli-



cation, academic excellence, intellectual and spiritual maturity, leadership development, and the ability to function as productive members of a multi-cultural society.

A strategic plan outlined by President Heater in October of 2000 embodied five near-term endeavors: Middle States accreditation by 2007; an established enrollment management; a strong development base; improvements to the library/learning center, and outcomes assessment.

In advancing these goals, certain assumptions were made: Bible education at WBC will continue; the Lanham campus will be operated indefinitely; renovation of facilities will continue; off-campus sites in Baltimore and Northern Virginia will be promoted; student enrollment will continue to increase in both the College and Seminary; the dormitory population will increase; regional accreditation will be gained by 2007; revenues will be sufficient to meet the budget; and faculty and staff will be willing to implement this strategic plan.

In the Centennial Year 2002, CBS had been accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and WBC/CBS were candidates for accreditation with the Middle States Association of Schools and Colleges. With their past record of service and durability, Washington Bible College and Capital Bible Seminary are firm, confident, eager and committed as the institution stands on the threshold of a second century. There seems to be unanimous agreement, that "...nothing is impossible if God is in it."

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# THE LIFE OF GEORGE A. MILES: 1904-2000

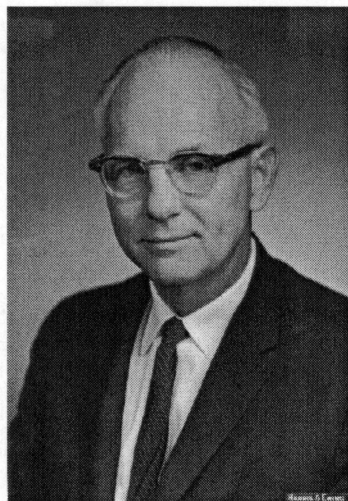
*by Rev. Dave Shive*

DESTINED TO BECOME the single greatest moving force in the history of Washington Bible College and Capital Bible Seminary, George Albert Miles was born in the state of Michigan on April 28, 1904. He was the oldest son of Lester and Susie Miles, both strong Christians who were involved in pastoral ministry for most of their married lives.

When George was twelve years old, his father entered full-time ministry, a move that proved to be the first of several turning points in George's life. No man had a greater desire to preach and serve God than did George's father. While both he and his wife had very limited education and no formal training, they were successful because of their unquestioned dedication to the Savior. George always considered it a great privilege to be born into a home where both parents were devoted to the Lord Jesus Christ and where the children were nurtured in the fear of the Lord.

As a teen, George struggled profoundly with the call of God on his life. He was torn between pleasing his parents and following his own desires to live for himself. When he was 16 or 17, the Methodist churches had planned a youth rally in a large nearby church. George went along with the young people from church and sat on the main floor while Lester and Susie watched from the balcony.

When the challenge was delivered to give one's life to Christ, George went forward thinking, "What will my folks think of me if I don't go forward?" Externally he appeared responsive, but his thoughts were, "I will be what God wants me to be, go where He wants me to go, and say what He wants me to say...but I am going to be an engineer!"



Upon graduation from high school, George decided to attend Albion College, a Methodist school where his parents assumed he would be nurtured with the Bible and would pursue spiritual goals. For the first two years of college, George was an average student. However, in his final two years his motivation changed and he made the honor roll as well as playing varsity basketball and baseball.

His parents were sadly mistaken, however, about the nature of education at Albion. Though he had a few roommates and fraternity brothers with deep religious convictions, who occasionally brought a positive influence into his life, the majority of the pressure came from friends, professors, and classes that constantly undermined the Bible's authority.

George's mother would frequently talk with him about the fact that she had dedicated him to the Lord before he was born. This information often disturbed George when he thought about God. Nevertheless, George could not recall anyone throughout his college or university days, let alone his father or mother, ever challenging him about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. George's later conclusion was that he had never been saved since assurance never came until January 1931.

In spite of his waywardness, the habits formed during the first eighteen years of his life caused George, no matter where he was, to always honor the Bible, make brief prayers, and join and attend church regularly.

The Lord never left George alone. He would often awaken at night under great conviction, breaking out in perspiration, and defiantly saying, "I am not going to be a preacher or a missionary; I am going to be an engineer!"

Upon graduation from Albion, George enrolled in the University of Michigan in order to complete his education toward a structural engineering degree. He graduated in June 1928 and two years later he received a government appointment to work in Washington, DC. He was assigned to the Supervising Architects Office, a position he would occupy for the remainder of his government service.

His first Sunday night in Washington found George attending a church where he met an enthusiastic Christian named Gene Scheele. Gene was living the reality that George longed for and he considered this encounter a second turning point in his life. Meeting about fifty other vibrant Christian young people, George knew immediately that he was in the right place.

George's government job was giving him the structural engineering experience that he had always craved. A gifted engineer, he had the privilege, during his brief government career, of working on the Internal Revenue Service building, Washington National Airport, a special vault beneath the Treasury Building, and the East Wing of the White House.

Meanwhile, one Sunday night in 1931 in Washington, George was asked to give his testimony. Though he could never remember a word that he said, he did recall an elderly woman telling him later that he was a hypocrite. This was the first

time he had been challenged and he sat down with one word ringing in his head: "hypocrite." When he returned to his room at the YMCA that evening, George knelt by the bed and acknowledged for the first time in his life that he was a sinner needing a Savior. The burden of guilt was immediately lifted and, from that moment on, George was fully yielded to the Lord.

George had immediately dedicated himself to two hours a day of Bible study, a habit he faithfully maintained for many years. He took a few night courses at the American Home Bible Institute under Glenn Wagner and Rev. Oyer, and committed himself to a rigorous Scripture memory program. Every day, he walked 25 minutes to his office, spending most of that time memorizing Scripture. In less than two years, he was teaching classes at the Bible Institute.

George was developing a conviction that the Lord was leading him into full-time Christian work. He shared this with Glenn Wagner who suggested they meet for prayer and discussion; but it would be eleven years before the Lord gave George the freedom to leave his government job and become president of the Washington Bible Institute.

Life for George was not only work and fellowship, however. He continued to hone his athletic skills, playing basketball on the YMCA team and baseball in government leagues. Basketball practices were Wednesday nights but, after his conversion, George felt that his place on Wednesday was at prayer meeting. When he told the team that he could not practice on Wednesdays, they immediately changed the practice to Thursdays.

George excelled at baseball, playing with the Treasury team in 1932, when he led all government leagues with a .479 batting average. He was competing against some of the finest players outside of organized baseball.

The idea of full-time Christian ministry began to occupy more and more of George's thinking. This quest led him to the American Home Bible Institute, a school begun by Mr. Collamore and led by Bill Bond and Glenn Wagner. In 1936, Glenn went to Dallas Theological Seminary and left the position of president empty. The school had a correspondence program and a number of small evening courses, all operated by volunteer effort. George had been teaching Bible classes for the institute and serving as a member of the board and was now asked to assume the duties of school president on a part-time basis.

It was at this time that a young lady named Ruth Esther Crawford began to attend George's Sunday school class. Ruth was born in Kaylor, Pennsylvania and, at the age of thirteen, had trusted Christ for her salvation. Having graduated from Butler Business College, she taught there until the age of thirty-two. Then, in 1936, she came to Washington, DC to work as a secretary in the Department of Agriculture. At this time, she became interested in Bible study and began to study at the American Home Bible Institute. She soon volunteered to assist him at AHBI. George and Ruth's association led to their marriage on October 22, 1938. From

that time until her death on September 10, 1980, she made herself available to do whatever was needed to advance the spread of the Gospel around the world.

Ruth and George's first child was born in August 1939. He was named John Edward, but he lived only eighteen hours. On May 21, 1941 Ruth gave birth to Grace and Esther, their twin girls. Since their one bedroom apartment was too small, Ruth and George rented a house at 1508 S. Pollard St. in Arlington. A year later, Martha arrived on October 2, 1942, a new companion for the twins.

In 1944 another boy was lost at birth in similar circumstances to the first one and in 1945, Ruth suffered a miscarriage caused by the Rh factor. She spent twenty-eight days in the hospital because of infection, incurring a bill totaling \$608. The Miles' had just moved to WBI full-time, so their funds were meager, yet the Lord supplied their need with gifts from friends totaling \$614. Like little children, George and Ruth were learning to walk by faith.

Bible memorization was begun with the children as soon as they were able to speak. All three girls could say the books of the Bible at lightning speed. When Martha was 2 ½ years old, she stood on the pulpit at the Gospel Mission and recited the books of the Bible to 200 men who were uniformly impressed.

George and Ruth took great pleasure in their daughters as they entered their teens with strong, biblical convictions. It gave them great pleasure to see their children choose the will of God for their lives.

In August 1957, Esther, one of the twins, died unexpectedly. She had been aggressive, enthusiastic and talkative, an avid reader with a high degree of interest in spiritual things. She deeply loved her father and loved to be with him, serving as his personal fashion critic.

Esther's body lay in the funeral home in Arlington for two days as hundreds of high school friends filed by. George stood by the casket and talked about the Lord with students. Many of them had never seen a dead body before or knew anything about death, heaven or hell.

When the United Nations was considering the future of Palestine, President Harry Truman formed a Palestinian commission to make recommendations on the position the nation should take regarding the issue. At that time, George was conducting a Bible study in the Shoreham Hotel in downtown Washington. Following a study on the land God promised to Israel, a visitor came up to Mr. Miles and introduced herself as the wife of a member of the commission. She told George that the information he shared that evening would be of great interest to her husband.

A few days later, George met with her husband and shared what the Scriptures had to say about the land promised Abraham's descendants. Impressed by the biblical details and stating that this was information the commission needed to hear, he asked Mr. Miles to outline on a map the land promised to Abraham. George was happy to comply with this request. The markings along with Scripture

references were placed on a large wall map which was taken by the gentleman to the committee.

Though the public may never know the influence this brief encounter had on the United States' decision to support Israel, George saw it as an example of God placing Christians in key positions at critical times in history.

When Glenn Wagner completed his studies at Dallas in 1940, he returned to Washington and to leadership in the institute, continuing there until 1944 when he joined the work of Pocket Testament League. With Glenn's departure, the trustees asked George to resume the presidency of the institute, this time in a full-time role. He was hesitant for many reasons, including his lack of seminary training. However, there were many encouraging reasons to accept the position. Unsure of the will of God, he resolved to let the Trustees and other advisers make the decision for him. If the vote were unanimous, he would accept. The vote was unanimous and George became their president. He immediately asked Ruth, "What do you think?" She replied, "Wherever the Lord calls you, I am with you 100%!"

On March 15, 1945, George resigned his government position and began at WBI the next day. Taking over as president of the College, his income was considerably reduced, but he was determined to give himself to the task one hundred percent. Temptation was immediate when a friend who had entered private engineering practice called on George for help, offering him almost as much as the College was paying if he would just give him one day a week. It was an appealing offer but George realized that one day would soon become two or more days, and so he declined the offer. George did not remember missing a single meal as he and Ruth rested on God's promises and sought God's kingdom first.

The College now took up a great deal of George's time. Teaching day and night, starting extension classes, and traveling with student groups on weekends all demanded adjustments at home. George always tried to be home for dinner because it was the only way he could spend any time with the children.

In the spring of 1953, George was presented with the opportunity to go to Asia with the Pocket Testament League. The trip was another turning point in his life as he traveled to Japan, Korea and Formosa. He contrasted the affluence of America with the poverty he saw there – the countless churches in every city in America while there were no churches, no witnesses, and no Bibles in much of Asia. As he pondered what was wrong with the American church that would allow such a situation to exist, it occurred to him that he was part of the problem. George determined that upon his return, he would be a different Bible college president by devoting himself even more intensely to missions.

The rapid growth of the school and the space limitations of the downtown property prompted George to do some investigation when, in December 1968, he heard of the financial problems of the Society of the Divine Savior in Lanham, Maryland. The WBC/CBS Trustees looked at the 63-acre property, were impressed



with the potential and, by late January, were in full agreement that an offer of \$1.2 million should be submitted. Closure was made on June 29, 1969.

George's engineering and architectural training and experience came into prominence upon moving to the Maryland campus. He developed a campus master plan, designed all nine of the building projects, and completed the working drawings for five of those. By doing the work "in house," construction was done for about half of contractor estimates. One wonders, how many college presidents have designed almost every building on their campus? This aspect of his presidency is but one example of the many talents that made George Miles an unusual leader.

While the Seminary remained at the Rhode Island Avenue property, the College took hold at the Lanham campus. George Miles continued as a visionary leader, simply letting the friends of the school know of the financial needs, and turning to prayer. Without a structured fundraising apparatus, George Miles raised funds to build five buildings at the Lanham campus, allowing space for the Seminary to join the College at that location.

Never losing sight of his original calling, George Miles continued to write tracts and share the Lord with people God sent his way. Still walking more than driving, George Miles was a living testimony to his Savior, throughout his tenure as President.

As with everyone, the aging process had begun to catch up with George. The first hint came in 1967 when it was discovered that he had a detached retina in his left eye. A series of eye problems, surgeries, and relapses eventually left him blind in one eye and with limited vision in the other. Along with the eye surgeries, various other ailments slowed George down significantly. Nevertheless, as long as he was able, he maintained a schedule of vigorous exercise.

During 1979-80, Ruth's strength seemed to diminish. She had been working daily on campus without complaint although she required a great deal of rest. Surgery was unable to bring healing and she went to be with the Lord October 7, 1980. She had given herself to the work of the Lord day and night.

The routine of life now changed for George. He prepared many of his own meals, ate frequently with Martha and her husband Bob, and with Leroy and Lena Blevins, and spent considerable time in his campus garden.

The death of Grace's husband, Charlie Hanshew, in a car accident on Labor Day, 1982, was a blow to George. Bob, Martha and George drove to be with Grace and her two sons, Dan and Tim and, after the funeral, George stayed with Grace through the next week to assist her in settling matters of their estate. She stood strong in the grace of God throughout this event, and the boys also did well considering their ages.

Dr. Watson Pindell, a long time member of the Board of Trustees and a close personal friend, had approached George about retirement, indicating that the



trustees wanted him to stay on as long as his health permitted. In 1982, Watson suggested, "Why don't you set a time when you think God would have you to step down?" This prompted George to pray and he decided that he would retire at age 80. His successor, Harry Fletcher, would take office on May 22, 1984.

Commencement week in 1984 highlighted the retirement. A special recognition of George's long ministry was held the Friday evening before commencement at a banquet with 1,000 people present. Many friends and alumni came from great distances. George's past was reviewed, the College surprised him with a new automobile, and he was presented with letters from President Reagan and the Governor of Maryland, as well as two large folders of letters from scores of friends.

Thus ended a period from 1936 to 1984 when George Miles was involved in biblical education in the Washington area with the final forty years spent as president of the institution.

After Ruth's death, George had begun to withdraw from people, spending time alone in his office and garden. In the spring of 1984 George seemed to feel assured that he would soon remarry. This desire eventuated in marriage to LaDelle Milo, whom he had known from the early days of WBI. They were married on August 16, 1984.

George's health continued to deteriorate until it became necessary for him to leave his much-loved Collamore apartment after almost 25 years. His brief time at a geriatric care center was difficult and, in the year 2000, he went to be with his beloved Lord. He left LaDelle behind until she joined him in heaven in the spring of 2002.

When Hebrews 11 speaks of the great men and women of faith who excelled in their devotion to God, the phrase "...of whom the world was not worthy" is used of them. George Miles was a "Renaissance Man," one who was unusually gifted with a multitude of skills, able to do an astonishing variety of tasks.

In George Miles, we had a twentieth-century hero of the faith whose life was lived to the fullest for his Savior and whose legacy inspires the devotion of all that learn about him. The WBC/CBS Family's life is richer for the privilege that has been ours to briefly stand in the shadow of such a giant. Future generations will do well to never forget the superb heritage left by those who have gone on before us.

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## PART TWO: CONTRIBUTIONS FROM CURRENT FACULTY

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### TEN MYTHS THE WORLD WANTS TO TEACH YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN<sup>1</sup>

*by Dr. Todd S. Beall*



WE LIVE IN a world full of conflict. Whether it is the Arab-Israeli conflict or the threat of terrorism at home, many today are concerned about the impact of these conflicts on our lives and our security. But there is a battle today that is more subtle and far more deadly than any armed conflict we face in the world today: the battle being waged by Satan for our minds and hearts.

Satan is a master at deception (Rev 12: 9). He delights in promulgating half-truths and lies so that we become easily swayed by what is not true. And the most important people he is after are our children and young people, so that the next generation may be firmly in his grasp. In this article,

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<sup>1</sup>This article is adapted from a two-part series originally preached at Forcey Memorial Church, Silver Spring, MD, on July 22 and 29, 2001. The title was inspired by an excellent book by Erwin Lutzer entitled *Exploding the Myths That Could Destroy America* (Moody, 1986).

I have selected ten myths that Satan and the world want us to believe.<sup>2</sup> We hear these myths, in various forms, day in and day out. These myths are not necessarily in order of importance, except for the first two, which are foundational. Most of the other myths stem from these two. While my approach is topical, the first five myths all can be seen clearly from Romans 1:18-32, which forms the primary text.

## MYTH #1: THERE IS NO CREATOR: THE UNIVERSE CAME ABOUT BY CHANCE

The first myth is the granddaddy of them all: *THERE IS NO CREATOR: THE UNIVERSE CAME ABOUT BY CHANCE*. This myth is propagated throughout our educational systems and media *ad nauseam*. A recent *Time Magazine* article is a good example: in its cover story entitled “How the Universe will End,” the authors claim that “scientists have just solved the biggest mystery in the cosmos.”<sup>3</sup> The teaser for the article says, “If you are still trying to wrap your mind around how the universe began—with that Big Bang that created everything out of nothing—wait until you find out what is coming at the other end of the space-time continuum” (p. 5). In the article itself, we are told that “about 15 billion years ago, the universe bursts into existence with the Big Bang, which gives birth to space, time, and all the matter and energy that the universe will ever hold” (p. 52). So the Big Bang, not God, created everything out of nothing.

It is no wonder that the idea of special creation by God is so vigorously attacked by the world system. If Satan can get us to deny God’s existence or His importance in the universe, then he has won! That is why the issue of evolution vs. creation is so paramount—because belief in evolution means that we don’t need to deal with the sticky matter of the existence of God, His demands on our life, a righteous standard, or His judgment of our unrighteous actions. It is as simple as that.

The Bible paints a totally different picture, right from the first words of Genesis:

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen 1:1). Romans 1:18-20 is one of the clearest passages that shows how God is seen in creation: “For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, because what may be known of God is manifest in them, for God has shown it to them. For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by

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<sup>2</sup> The term “world” in this article refers to the world system under the control of Satan (see John 12:31; Eph 2:2; and 1 John 5:19).

<sup>3</sup> *Time*, June 25, 2001.

the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are without excuse.”

This witness of God in creation is vitally important, because all people know it (theologians call this witness *general revelation*, as opposed to *special revelation*, such as the Bible). Creation points people back to God. As Psalm 19:1 says, “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament shows His handiwork.”

The Bible says that not only is there a Creator, but that creation clearly shows His power and divine attributes (Rom 1:20). This testimony is so powerful that even today, despite almost a century of determined efforts by the world in most of our schools and universities, many people still have a hard time believing in evolution. I myself am a product of eight years of attempted brainwashing, first in high school and then at Princeton University. Why didn't it take root? Because evolution simply doesn't make sense! Even a child looks at the universe and knows that God created it.

Two age-old arguments for the existence of God are rooted in the evidence of creation. The first is the *cosmological argument* (or argument from cause). The cosmological argument says that every effect must have a cause. The world is an effect; therefore, it must have had a cause. When you see a watch, you know there must have been a watchmaker.

Even the modern-day weathermen speak of Mother Nature doing this or that; a feeble admission that the various weather patterns, with their release of a great deal of power, must have had a cause. We can see that power in a thunderstorm or a hurricane quite clearly. The words of God as He questioned Job out of the whirlwind in Job 38 give us a tremendous exposition of this truth:

Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who determined its measurements? Surely you know! Or who stretched the line upon it? To what were its foundations fastened? Or who laid its cornerstone? (Job 38:4-6)

God's power in the universe is obvious. Only a fool would deny it.

A second age-old argument for the existence of God is the *teleological argument* (or argument from design). It says that since the world exhibits order and design, it must have had a master designer, namely God. Going back to our watch, when we open up the back of it, we see the intricate design of it (if you've ever tried to take one apart, you know what I mean!), and know that there must have been an intelligent watchmaker behind it all. In the same way, the wonderful, amazing design of the universe demonstrates that there must be an intelligent master designer who

created it in such an intricate fashion. Consider the eye: it is unbelievably intricate, with its rods and cones, and all the rest, all suited perfectly for the purpose of seeing. Our modern-day cameras have only recently come up with “auto focus,” and they still can’t do it as well as the eye!

Darwin himself recognized this difficulty. In *The Origin of Species*, he wrote, “The belief that an organ so perfect as the eye could have been formed by natural selection is enough to stagger any one” (p. 97). A few years after publication of *The Origin of Species*, Darwin wrote, “The eye to this day gives me a cold shudder.”<sup>4</sup>

In recent years, the argument for design has become even stronger. The advances in molecular biology, with the incredible design of the DNA and RNA molecules, make our modern-day computers pale as information systems. As Michael Denton states,

“The capacity of DNA to store information vastly exceeds that of any other known system... the information necessary to specify the design of all the species of organisms which have ever existed on the planet could be held in a teaspoon.”<sup>5</sup>

The human genome project has surely shown the intricate design of man. The entire human genome consists of 3.5 billion base pairs.<sup>6</sup> If compiled in books, the data would fill over 200 1,000-page phone books. Reading it would take 26 years around the clock.

Here is one molecular biologist’s conclusion about the design of the universe:

It is the sheer universality of perfection, the fact that everywhere we look, to whatever depth we look, we find an elegance and ingenuity of an absolutely transcending quality, which so mitigates against the idea of chance. Is it really credible that random processes could have constructed a reality, the smallest element of which—a functional protein or gene—is complex beyond our own creative capacities, a reality which is the very antithesis of chance, which excels in every sense anything produced by the intelligence of man? Alongside the level of ingenuity and complexity exhibited by the molecular machinery of life, even our most advanced artifacts appear clumsy.<sup>7</sup>

In a recent book by Michael Behe called *Darwin’s Black Box*, Behe (who is a biochemist, not an evangelical or a creationist) argues that the biochemical mecha-

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<sup>4</sup>F. Darwin, *Life and Letters of Charles Darwin* (3 vols.; ed. F. Darwin; John Murray, 1888) 2:273. See also A. Desmond and J. Moore, *Darwin: The Life of a Tormented Evolutionist*, 319-20: “the piecemeal evolution of a complex, integrated organ like the eye left him in a cold sweat.”

<sup>5</sup>Michael Denton, *Evolution: A Theory in Crisis* (Adler & Adler, 1986) 334.

<sup>6</sup>I.e., adenine and thymine or guanine and cytosine.

<sup>7</sup>*Ibid.*, 342.

nisms are so irreducibly complex and interdependent that they must have been designed by God or a higher intelligence. Here's what he says:

Over the past four decades modern biochemistry has uncovered the secrets of the cell....The result of these cumulative efforts to investigate the cell—to investigate life at the molecular level—is a loud, clear, piercing cry of “*design!*” The result is so unambiguous and so significant that it must be ranked as one of the greatest achievements in the history of science....The magnitude of the victory, gained at such great cost through sustained effort over the course of decades, would be expected to send champagne corks flying in labs around the world. The triumph of science should evoke cries of “Eureka!” from ten thousand throats, should occasion much hand-slapping and high-fiving, and perhaps even be an excuse to take a day off.

But no bottles have been uncorked, no hands slapped. Instead, curious, embarrassed silence surrounds the stark complexity of the cell. When the subject comes up in public, feet start to shuffle, and breathing gets a bit labored. In private people are a bit more relaxed; many explicitly admit the obvious but then stare at the ground, shake their heads, and let it go at that.

Why does the scientific community not greedily embrace its startling discovery? Why is the observation of design handled with intellectual gloves? The dilemma is that while one side of the elephant is labeled intelligent design, the other side might be labeled God.<sup>8</sup>

So as Romans 1:18-20 tells us, creation demonstrates God's power, His perfection, His knowledge, and, in a nutshell, His deity. Creation shouts it at us every day, if we will only listen.

## MYTH 2: THERE IS NO ABSOLUTE TRUTH; ALL TRUTH IS RELATIVE

A second myth stems directly from the first. If there is no Creator, then *THERE IS NO ABSOLUTE TRUTH; ALL TRUTH IS RELATIVE*. To put it another way, man's opinion is just as important as God's opinion (if there is a god!), and one person's opinion is just as valid as another's. So my belief is just as good as yours; all beliefs are accept-

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<sup>8</sup>Michael Behe, *Darwin's Black Box* (Free Press, 1996) 232-33.



able; the Bible is just another book; and Christ is just one prophet among many. These are simply a few of the principles that result from the myth that there is no absolute truth.

The elevation of man's opinion and thought is also spoken of in Romans 1. Romans 1:21-22 says, "although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools." If man rejects God as the Creator, then man's wisdom rules. But which man's wisdom? My wisdom becomes just as important as yours. The results of this myth are disastrous and ultimately chaotic. We cannot go into this matter in detail here, but early law in America was based upon the laws of the Creator, as revealed in the Bible.<sup>9</sup> In the twentieth century that foundation crumbled, and the result is chaos insofar as our laws are concerned. Laws against abortion have been replaced with laws protecting abortion clinics; laws against homosexual conduct have been replaced by laws promoting this conduct; and so forth. Since one man's opinion is as valid as another's, popular opinion polls and "town meetings" have become all important in shaping the political views of our politicians, instead of bedrock principles. A politician who may have been anti-abortion when that position was in the majority may now easily become staunchly pro-abortion when that opinion gains the majority, without anyone accusing him of flip-flopping – after all, whose standards are right anyway?

Our educators in prestigious universities, our national media, and popular actors and athletes have become elevated in the public's eyes, so that their opinions have become the *de facto* new standard. Those who believe that the Bible should be the standard are now viewed as extremists; tolerance of anything and everything except for biblical Christianity is the new law of the day. But soon this sort of "anything goes" behavior will result in a total breakdown of society: anarchy that will pave the way for a future world liberator, the Antichrist, who will bring only a false and temporary peace, as he deceives the whole world.

The biblical truth is straightforward: God's ways are far higher than man's. As Isaiah 55:8-9 says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways, declares the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts" (see also 1 Cor 1:20).

To the relativism of this age, the words of Jesus in John 14:6 provide a direct contrast: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

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<sup>9</sup> See, for example, Kerby Anderson, "A Christian Perspective on American Government," in *Politics and Public Policy: A Christian Response* (ed. by Timothy Demby and Gary Stewart; Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2000) 213-20; and John Whitehead, *The Second American Revolution* (Cook, 1982) 28-36.

### MYTH 3: THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAN AND ANIMAL

A third myth the world wants to teach is that *THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MAN AND ANIMAL*. Our passage in Romans 1 shows that the person who has rejected God also rejects man's dominion over the animals. Romans 1:22-25 states,

Professing to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like corruptible man—and birds and four-footed animals and creeping things. Therefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, in the lusts of their hearts, to dishonor their bodies among themselves, who exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and **worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator**, who is blessed forever (emphasis mine).

So instead of having dominion over the animals, man elevates them even in the place of God Himself.

Since we have rejected the Creator, and God's created order, why should there be any difference between a man and a mosquito? Man is simply in a different place in the biological tree. This myth is a natural by-product of evolutionary theory rather than biblical creation. And the myth is promulgated everywhere today. The July 23, 2001 *Time Magazine* cover story, entitled "How Apes Became Human," boldly proclaims, "Meet your newfound ancestor, a chimp-like forest creature that stood up and walked 5.8 million years ago" (pp. 54-55). And in a disturbing online poll sponsored by *Time Magazine*, the question was asked, "Do you believe Man descended from ape-like ancestors?" Out of 263,772 votes cast, an astounding 96.5% said "yes," 3.3% said "no," and 0.2% said "not sure."<sup>10</sup> Assuming that those using the web are generally younger and perhaps better educated, that percentage shows that this myth may be gaining almost universal acceptance among the young people of today.

But the Bible is clear that man is not an animal. In fact, man was created as the crown of creation, in God's own image. Man was given a soul that animals do not have. Genesis 1:26 affirms that man was created to have dominion over the animals. As Genesis 1:26 states, when God created man He said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." Psalm 8 reaffirms the same truth about man's amazing place in the universe – a far cry from a mosquito or a chimpanzee in God's eyes.

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<sup>10</sup> Data as of July 22, 2001.

## MYTH 4: THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

A fourth myth the world wants to teach us is that *THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN*. Again, this is a result of the rejection of God's created order. Romans 1:26-27 speaks of the confusion of the sexual identity of men and women:

For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due.

It should be evident even from our physical design that a man was meant to have sexual relations with a woman, not another man, but not according to this myth. Men and women are identical in every way. Homosexuality and lesbianism are a clear result of that kind of unbiblical thinking.

The attacks on marriage and the family today are coming from all directions. The family is seen as an outdated concept.<sup>11</sup> Sadly, because of the sinfulness of men and women, many traditional families have been less than ideal. But what we need to do in the church is to work on strengthening families and continuing to build family relationships, not cave in to the idea that the family is outdated or irrelevant.

The same is true for the idea of male headship. This concept has also been ridiculed in recent years, and again some of the fault lies in the wrong behavior of many men who confused headship with authoritarian, unloving behavior. But the Bible is very clear that marriage is between one man and one woman; that homosexuality and lesbianism are abominations in the Lord's sight (see Lev 18:22 and Rom 1:26-27); and that the man is to be the head of the home. As Ephesians 5:22-23 states, "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church." This principle goes right back to the created order, as 1 Timothy 2:12-14 makes clear.

## MYTH 5: MY PLEASURE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING ELSE

A fifth myth the world wants to teach us is that *MY PLEASURE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANYTHING ELSE*. So, for example, there is nothing wrong with any kind of sex,

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<sup>11</sup> For example, see the statements issued by The Fourth World Congress on Women held on Sept 4-15, 1995 in Beijing, China.

whether in or out of marriage, whether with a man or a woman or even a child, as long as it is pleasurable for me.

Today we are saturated with pleasure, especially sexual pleasure. Thanks to cable TV, magazines, movies, VCR/DVD rentals, and the internet, sexually explicit material has never been easier to get or harder to completely ignore. The message seems to be, the more sex the better. If you don't have sex, you are a moron. Again, the Romans 1 passage takes us down the road of unbridled pleasure: v. 24 says that "God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity" and vv. 26-27 (cited above) describe the results of these unbridled lusts in detail.

Without the recognition of a higher authority, and with the rejection of the divine order God has placed in the universe, we are left with no bounds or limits on our pleasures. This is usually what is portrayed on TV or the movies: sex before marriage or outside of marriage is pleasurable, so why not do it? Usually the consequences are not shown: guilt, pregnancy, betrayal of loved one, disease, and so forth. As we know, real life is more complicated than that. Yet, people try to minimize the consequences of their actions by having, for example, an abortion of the child if pregnant. This action only adds to the sin of the original act by taking a human life.

The risk of disease with extramarital sex, and especially homosexual sex, is great. In Romans 1:27, Paul says that these shameful acts will result in their own punishment: "receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due." Some of this judgment falls upon their bodies: infectious diseases such as syphilis, herpes, and AIDS.

So what is the world's answer to these problems? Well, if you have sex, use birth control or protection. If you get pregnant, have an abortion. The "experts" of the world try to teach teens to have what is called "responsible" or "safe sex," despite the fact that abstinence is the only 100% effective way to avoid getting pregnant or spreading sexually transmitted diseases, not to mention the matter of a clean conscience before God. The world tries to cover up the real problem, which is sex outside of God's divinely designed order of marriage. Pleasure outside of God's boundaries may seem wonderful for the moment, but its joy is fleeting (just like the person who has too much to drink: the hangover in the morning is horrendous!).

There is another problem with this myth of unbridled pleasure: ultimately it leads to bigger problems when my pleasure conflicts with your pleasure. If my pleasure is the most important thing to me, and your pleasure is the most important thing to you, there is bound to come a time when one conflicts with the other – what then? James 4:1-2 sums up the problem well: "What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have; so you commit murder. You are envious and cannot obtain; so you fight and quarrel."

Pleasure outside of God's order leads to one problem after another. It may seem to be the road to happiness and contentment, but that is a myth. Scripture says that it leads to fights, conflicts, and unhappiness. For the Christian, pleasure is good and right only within God's order; in the sexual realm, that means abstinence from sex before marriage and complete faithfulness to one's spouse in marriage. As Proverbs 5:18 says, "Let your fountain be blessed, and rejoice with the wife of your youth."

## MYTH 6: IF I ONLY HAD MORE MONEY I'D BE HAPPY

A sixth myth the world wants to teach us is, *IF I ONLY HAD MORE MONEY, I'D BE HAPPY*. Put another way, the most important thing in life is to have money or possessions. In one sense these two myths (the fifth and the sixth myth) really go hand in hand. Love for pleasure and love for more money or material possessions are closely linked. They are listed in 2 Timothy 3:2-4 as characteristics of the end times. And both are myths of the world that will not satisfy.

The world says that making more money is the main goal in life. The increase in gambling (including on-line gambling), the proliferation of lotteries run and sanctioned by most states, and the popularity of casinos show that we are obsessed with getting rich. That has even become the main purpose for education: get a college education not so that you can be prepared to lead a productive life, but so that you can make more money! I think that is why many Christian parents do not encourage their children to go to Bible colleges such as Washington Bible College or choose missions as a career – what money can be made in that?

But the Bible paints a completely different picture of what our priorities ought to be and what should make us truly happy. Money and possessions are not the answer. In Luke 12:13, Jesus warns, "take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of things he possesses." Jesus then tells the parable of the rich fool who decided to build bigger barns to store all his crops, rather than give his excess to the poor. Instead, God took his life that very night. Jesus ends the story with a very sober warning: "so is he who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God" (Luke 12:16-21).

There are so many warnings in Scripture about the love of money that we dare not treat it lightly! The pursuit of riches can be a great temptation and lead us away from the things that really matter. Paul says in 1 Timothy 6:9-10 that

those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

Parents, what are you teaching your children in this regard? Are you teaching them by your own example, or by what you encourage them in doing, that money is important? Are you, or they, getting “choked with cares, riches, and the pleasures of life” (Luke 8:14)? Pursuing money can be a very subtle thing. We need to be teaching our children, and ourselves, to be content. And we also need to be teaching our children to be good stewards and generous with whatever they have. True happiness consists in giving to God and others, not storing up money for ourselves.

### **MYTH 7: I CAN DO WHAT I FEEL LIKE; THERE ARE NO CONSEQUENCES TO MY ACTIONS**

A seventh myth the world wants to teach us is that *I CAN DO WHAT I FEEL LIKE; THERE ARE NO CONSEQUENCES TO MY ACTIONS*. This myth is a direct result of myths 1: (there is no creator) and 2: (there is no absolute truth). In particular, this myth is the logical extension of the elevation of man’s opinion and thought. Another way of putting it is, I am in control of my own destiny. Pride is at the root of this myth. It says that God doesn’t exist—or if He does, He doesn’t care—so I can do just as I please. There won’t be any consequences to my actions.

What surprises me in our society is not that people sin: of course they do (and so do I!). What continually amazes me is how boldly and arrogantly they sin. This is a natural result of the breakdown of belief in a Creator and in moral absolutes.

Scripture has much to say about this attitude. In Isaiah 5:20-21, Isaiah pronounces a woe on people with such arrogant thinking: “Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; who substitute bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe to those who are wise in their own eyes, and clever in their own sight.” In Zephaniah 1:12, God says that in the end time, He will deal with this kind of attitude: “It shall come to pass at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and punish the men who are settled in complacency, who say in their heart, ‘The LORD will not do good, nor will He do evil.’” God is going to judge this complacent, smug, self-righteous attitude (see also 2 Pet 3:3-12).

Sometimes we water down the idea of the fear of the Lord or the judgment of the Lord. But the judgment of the Lord is taught from Genesis to Revelation. God may not immediately right every wrong that people do, but He will judge their actions in His perfect timing. It is a total myth that we can sin all we want, and there won’t be any consequences.



## MYTH 8: THERE'S NO SPIRITUAL WARFARE GOING ON (AND SATAN DOESN'T EXIST)

An eighth myth the world wants to teach us is THAT *THERE'S NO SPIRITUAL WARFARE GOING ON*. A corollary to this myth is that Satan does not even exist. A survey taken by George Barna a few years ago indicated that 60% of all Americans and 56% of all church attenders did not believe that Satan was real. Among evangelicals the figure was only a little better: 47% did not believe that Satan was real, and 4% were unsure.<sup>12</sup> If we do not think our opposition even exists, that surely does not give us much incentive to fight a battle! And that is exactly what Satan wants: our complacency and our lethargy.

One thing is for sure: Satan is not complacent! The Bible describes him as a roaring lion. 1 Peter 5:8 says that “your adversary the devil walks around like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.” This is Satan’s open, intense, direct attack. 2 Corinthians 4:4 says that he blinds the minds of unbelievers so that they will not accept the Gospel. He openly persecutes believers, as Paul describes in 2 Timothy 3:11-12.

Satan is also described as a crafty serpent. In fact, this is how we first meet Satan in the Bible, and it is his most common device: he subtly entices and tempts. In the garden of Eden, he told lies and half-truths to get Eve to disobey God. Jesus says in John 8:44 that Satan is “the father of lies.”

Satan is a master deceiver. 2 Corinthians 11:13-14 says that Satan “transforms himself into an angel of light,” and his followers do exactly the same thing. In Ephesians 6:12, Paul describes the fierce spiritual battle we fight against Satan and his cohorts.

So how can we possibly prevail, if the battle is so fierce, and the enemy has so many tricks? Paul describes the Christian’s armor in Ephesians 6:14-20. The Christian can only prevail as he leans on the Lord and His strength. We can not do it on our own. We can not defeat the devil by ourselves, no matter how hard we try. It is a spiritual and supernatural battle, not one between mere mortals. The Lord is the only one who has successfully defeated the devil, and it is upon Him that we must lean for support. That is why Paul says, “be strong in the **Lord**...put on the whole armor of **God**.” And this armor consists of truth, faith, the Word of God, and prayer. It is only through reliance upon these spiritual weapons that Satan can be defeated.

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<sup>12</sup>George Barna, *What Americans Believe* (Regal, 1991) 206.

## MYTH 9: I CAN BE A CHRISTIAN AND STILL BE A FRIEND OF THE WORLD

A ninth myth the world wants to teach us is that *I CAN BE A CHRISTIAN AND STILL BE A FRIEND OF THE WORLD*. Now obviously one must be careful here. We are in the world, but we are not to be of the world. As Jesus says concerning his disciples in John 17:15, "I do not pray that You should take them out of the world, but that You should keep them from the evil one." We must have contact with the world, and be salt and light in the world, but we must make sure that we are not friends with the world.

Unfortunately, all indications are that American Christians in our day far more easily accommodate themselves to the world than change it. The surveys done by George Barna and others indicate that there is little or no difference between Christians and non-Christians in such things as the rate of divorce, going to R-rated movies, the purchase of lottery tickets, being in financial debt, or giving to non-profit organizations.<sup>13</sup> How can this be? It is because too many of us are consciously or unconsciously filling ourselves with the world's values and thinking. Erwin Lutzer, in his book *Exploding the Myths that Could Destroy America*, has a superb chapter entitled, "The Myth that We Can Take on Water and Still Stay Afloat." He says, "there is something suspicious about evangelicalism when it turns its sail with every wind that blows. When we accommodate the Scripture in a desire to be relevant, we have nothing to say to this generation" (p. 176).

In *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, the last book he ever wrote, Francis Schaeffer says the same thing: "Here is the great evangelical disaster, the failure of the evangelical world to stand for truth as truth. There is only one word for this – namely *accommodation*: the evangelical church has accommodated to the world spirit of the age" (p. 37).

The cover article of *Newsweek* magazine on July 16, 2001, entitled "Jesus Rocks!," describes the huge explosion of Christian entertainment—including music, books, videos, and other Christian products—in the past few years. It is now a 3 billion dollar a year industry. But the subtitle of an accompanying article, "God, Mammon and 'Bibleman,'" asks a telling question: "Christian entertainment is adding up to temporal riches. Can a movement become a mass market without selling its soul?" (p. 45).

Alarm bells should go off when we find non-Christian publishers all of a sudden buying Christian publishers and major record companies buying independent Christian labels. We need to be careful that in appealing to the world and reaching out to the world we do not accommodate ourselves to the values of the world. And when folks such as Barna are telling us that there is no appreciable difference

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<sup>13</sup>George Barna, *The Second Coming of the Church* (Word, 1998) 6, 121.

between the behavior and attitudes of Christians and non-Christians, and when Christians apparently spend more time watching TV in one evening than the total amount of time they spend reading the Bible in a week, it appears that we have done lots more accommodating to the world than changing it.

The Bible unequivocally says that we cannot love God and love the world system at the same time. James 4:4 puts it this way:

Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. The apostle John is equally clear in 1 John 2:15-17:

Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

As Christians, we should want to build our foundation on something that lasts. It isn't the fleeting pleasures of the world – they will soon be gone. Rather than be a friend of the world, we should seek to be a friend of God.

## **MYTH 10: IT'S OK TO BE A CHRISTIAN, AS LONG AS I KEEP IT TO MYSELF**

Finally, a tenth myth the world wants to teach us is that *IT'S OK TO BE A CHRISTIAN AS LONG AS I KEEP IT TO MYSELF*. That goes right back to myth 2, where there is no absolute truth, so my opinion is just as valid as your opinion. So let's not rock the boat – I'll respect your religion as long as you keep it out of sight.

Of course, that's precisely what Satan would want genuine Christians to do. If he can't change their minds, the next best thing is to muzzle them! America is creeping towards anarchy precisely because it has abandoned its foundation of laws based on biblical truth. We have accepted this myth of a private, non-interfering faith, which means that our faith can no longer affect the way we think or act in the public arena. This is utter nonsense, but it has become the *de facto* religion of our day.

The Bible states clearly that our Christianity is not to be hidden! As Jesus says in Matthew 5:13-16,

You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt has become tasteless, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled under foot by men. You

are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp stand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Our responsibility is to be salt and light in this dark world, not to hide our light so no one can see it!

## CONCLUSION

So there they are: ten myths the world wants to teach you and your children. The myth that there is no Creator – the universe came about by chance; the myth that there is no absolute truth – all truth is relative; the myth that there is no difference between man and animal, or between men and women; the myth that my pleasure is more important than anything else, or that if I just had more money I'd be happy; the myth that I can do what I feel like doing – there are no consequences to my actions; the myth that there's no spiritual warfare going on (and Satan doesn't exist); the myth that I can be a Christian and still be a friend of the world; and the myth that it's OK to be a Christian, as long as I keep it to myself. As the last days draw nearer, these myths will be proclaimed with even greater fervor.

My urgent plea is that we do not get caught up in Satan's deception, in these seductive myths of the world. Instead, we must saturate ourselves with God's Word; fill our minds with His thoughts; pray continually for His guidance; be prepared for trials along the way; and be available for how He wants to use us to serve Him as a light to those all around. We must make sure that we are rooted and grounded in God, in the absolute truth of His Word, and in its relevance to every aspect of our lives.

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## OUR FORGIVING FATHER'S HEARTBEAT

*by Dr. Robert Kellemen*



THE 1993 WESTERN, *Unforgiven*, directed by and starring Clint Eastwood, is a dark parable of the driven, unforgiven mood of our insecure age. This grim and gritty film accurately portrays the pain and emptiness of the human heart in need of grace.

Eastwood plays the aging gunslinger, Bill Munny. In his younger, wilder days, Munny had killed many men. As the film opens, we meet a reformed Bill Munny, who is no longer a gunslinger. The love of his wife Claudia helped him give up whiskey and hang up his guns. But now Claudia is dead, killed by smallpox. Grieving and debt-ridden, Munny tries to eke out a living for himself and his two children as a pig farmer on the Texas plains.

One day, a brash young gunslinger calling himself the Schofield Kid rides into town and reminds Bill Munny of his ugly past. "I hear tell you've killed a lot of men," the Kid says to him. "Well, up in Wyoming there's a thousand dollars to be had for killing two cowboys. Seems those boys found some women one night and one of 'em got mad at the woman he was with and slashed up her face. The other ladies in that establishment have posted bounty on the heads of those two cowboys. If you come with me, we can kill those boys and split the reward."

"No," Munny replies, honoring the wishes of his dead wife. "No more killin' for me. I ain't like that anymore."

The kid rides off, alone. But then Munny begins to think. "How are my children going to live? How will I pay off this debt? My split of that money sure would go a long way."

So he straps on his gun and rides off to catch up with the Schofield Kid. As they ride together the Kid, fascinated by Munny's reputation as a killer, pumps him for stories of his past. But Munny doesn't want to remember his past sins. "I ain't like that anymore," he keeps repeating to the Kid and to himself, denying the obvious question, "If that's so, why am I riding off to kill a couple of cowboys?"

Munny and the Kid track down the two cowboys. Munny shoots one of them, a fresh-faced boy named Davey. It's a grisly scene. Later, the Kid shoots the other cowboy—Quick Mike. It's a cold-blooded killing of an unarmed man.

Later Munny and the Kid sit under a tree outside of town waiting for their reward money. While they wait they talk. The Kid is full of remorse and on the verge of tears. His earlier fascination with killing has evaporated in the aftermath of the shooting.

Munny, whose soul is stained with the blood of countless men, says, "Terrible thing, killing a man. You take away all he's got and all he's ever gonna have."

"Yeah," says the Kid, his voice choking. "Well I guess they had it comin'."

Munny looks back at him coldly, then says, "We all have it comin', kid."

It's a dark moment in a dark film. Munny's terse comment is the statement of a man who cannot escape his past, his sin, or his guilt. It is the statement of a damned soul. The title is fitting, for this film is about guilt and retribution. Everyone in the film is guilty and none is forgiven.

*Unforgiven* won four Academy Awards, including best picture. Why? The answer is simple. It touches the very nerve center of our soul. We all need to hear the story of our Father's forgiveness. We all long to experience the thrill of our forgiving Father's welcoming embrace. Each of us, in our unique way, is a prodigal wandering far from home. Each of us longs for our homecoming.

## LEAVING HOME

Jesus addresses our inner longing in Luke 15. As a master artist, He paints a beautiful portrait of our forgiving Father. Put your ear to the chest of Christ to hear the heartbeat of God—the heartbeat of our Forgiving Father. The opening of the parable is delightfully conventional, even to the point of being childlike. "There was a man who had two sons." It is almost as if Jesus begins His story with the words, "Once upon a time." What happened once upon a time to this father of two sons?

He begins the action with the youngest son's demand. To us the words seem innocent enough. "Father, give me my share of the estate." To the father, the words are radical. They suggest heartless rejection. Jesus tells it all so simply and matter-of-factly that it is difficult to realize fully that what is happening here is totally unheard of—hurtful, offensive, and in radical contradiction to the most venerated tradition of the times.



Kenneth Bailey, in his penetrating explanation of Jesus' story, shows that the son's manner of leaving is tantamount to wishing his father dead. Bailey writes:

For over fifteen years I have been asking people of all walks of life from Morocco to India and from Turkey to the Sudan, about the implications of a son's request for his inheritance while the father is still living. The answer has always been emphatically the same. The conversation runs as follows: "Has anyone ever made such a request in your village?" "Impossible!" "If anyone ever did, what would happen?" "His father would beat him on the head, of course!" "Why?" "Because the request means that he wants his father to die."

The implication underlying the son's request is simple. "Father, I cannot wait for you to die. Get out of my way, old man! Drop dead!"

Can we imagine the pain? Perhaps some of us with teenage or grown children have faced just such hurt and humiliation. There can be no greater pain than the ache in our soul when the child we love says those dreaded words, "I hate you Mom!" or "I hate you Dad!" Or perhaps we know the pain from the other side. In a moment of bitterness and rage, maybe those death words slipped out of our mouth. "I wish you weren't my parents!" Or worse, "I hate you!"

Having wished his father dead, this younger son wastes no time collecting his newfound wealth and travelling to a distant country. In our culture, this seems harmless enough. A recent survey of Americans found that 67% of us no longer live in the same state in which we were born. Not so for this young man and his father. In their day, moving away from the family home was a sign of great disrespect. This loving father now feels the same agony as the parents of a runaway teen. Such a home leaving produces immense sorrow and shame in the heart of the father.

To understand the father's pain and the son's shame, we must place ourselves in the social context of Christ's parable. In Luke 15:1-2 we read, "Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law muttered, 'this man welcomes sinners and eats with them.'" The religious leaders of the day are complaining because Jesus does not keep respectable company. He welcomes sinners! He receives and accepts them. This parable represents the sinners as the prodigal son and the Pharisees as the older son.

In response, Jesus tells three parables, each portraying the same theme. The portrait Christ is painting impresses upon our senses the truth that sin is "*away-ness*." The son moves away from the father. Nothing breaks the heart of God our Father more than his children moving away from Him spiritually. Why do we ALL need forgiveness? Why do we all "have it comin'," as Clint Eastwood says? We all

have it coming because we are all prodigal sons, who have chosen to abandon our Father.

Like the prodigal, we have all said, "I'm leaving You, Father!" Like him, we also have said, "Father, I don't need you!" Leaving the fullness of the father's love, the younger son embarks on a quest to find fulfillment in the world. The father's voice of unconditional love has always said, "You are safe with me. You can rest in me. You are my beloved." The son shuts his ears to this voice.

Leaving the voice of His father, this self-confident young man begins to hear the voices of the world. This son, like each of us, hears those other voices—loud, full of promises, and very alluring and seductive. "You don't need the Father. You can make it on your own. Take care of yourself!" But the son forgets a basic principle of human nature—*something* must fill the empty void we create when we push the Father out. As Blaise Pascal wrote, in everyone is a "God-shaped vacuum." It will either be filled with God, or a counterfeit will unsuccessfully attempt to fill it.

Therefore, these voices have a way of coming back to haunt us. They certainly haunt this son. Notice how Jesus pictures the haunting in verses 13-14. "Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need."

He squanders his wealth, scattering it abroad without restraint. He "blew the whole wad" in a futile attempt to fill his spiritual need with material possessions and false affections. The prodigal not only squanders his wealth, but he also becomes entangled in the powerful enticements of the world. He spends his money in loose living. He vainly attempts to fill his emptiness with the unrestrained satisfaction of the flesh.

Years ago, a woman I was counseling spoke the saddest words I have ever heard. We had been talking about her past and our Father's healing power when she looked at me with piercing eyes and said, "Bob, you don't understand. Some sins are so deep that even the love of God can't touch them." Though they are false words, this tormented Christian believed them. Because of his lifestyle, the prodigal son would succumb to similar false thinking. He would come to believe that his sins were so deep that he was doomed to live an unforgiven life.

His fate, however, must take a backseat for the moment. Recall that Jesus began His parable with the words, "There was a man who had two sons." To hear the heartbeat of our Father, we must also view Christ's portrait of the elder son. Jesus introduces him later in the story, after the father had begun to celebrate with the younger son. Upon hearing the sound of music and dancing, the elder son called one of the servants to determine the cause of the commotion. "Your brother has come," he replied, "and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has him back safe and sound." The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his

father went out and pleaded with him. But he answered his father, "Look! All these years I have been slaving for you and never disobeyed your orders. Yet you never gave me even a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends" (15:27-29).

In the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, Russia hangs one of Rembrandt's most famous paintings: "The Return of the Prodigal Son." In Rembrandt's depiction of this powerful parable, the elder son stands far off, hands clasped, back stiff and erect. There is a great gulf between him and his father. It is a picture of a son, who though he had never left home, long ago left home. He saw himself as a slave, not as a son. As Henri Nouwen writes:

Not only did the younger son, who left home to look for freedom and happiness in a distant country, get lost, but the one who stayed home also became a lost man. Exteriorly, he did all the things a good son is supposed to do, but interiorly, he wandered away from his father. He did his duty, worked hard every day, and fulfilled all his obligations but became increasingly unhappy and unfree.

He too experiences "awayness" from his father. He is away from the father because he is clinging to his self-righteousness. Defiantly he confronts his father. "I never disobeyed your orders. I never transgressed your commandments!" He is unwilling to acknowledge that he is no better than his younger brother. He is unwilling to admit that he, too, "has it comin'," and is in need of fatherly forgiveness.

## RETURNING HOME

The younger son, on the other hand, recognizes what the elder son will not. Having spent everything, the prodigal son is in great need. Physically, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually he is at the end of his rope. With a few vivid details, Jesus portrays the depths to which the son falls as he is initiated into the world of moral consequences. "So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything" (15:15-16). Culturally, the Jews saw swine as unclean animals. To eat the food of pigs was to be reduced to a sub-human level. Yet, even this was denied to him.

He came to his senses when he hit rock bottom. "He said, 'How many of my father's hired men have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired men.' So he got up and went to his father" (15:17-20a).

J.C. Penny, the famous millionaire store owner, also came to his senses when he came to the end of his rope. Penny was seriously depressed as a young man. He

tells of being confined in a mental hospital suffering such severe depression that the doctors had given up on him. One morning, on hearing a commotion down the hall, he put on his bathrobe and found his way to the chapel where people were singing about putting their trust in the Lord. Penny, the son of a Baptist preacher, knew all about Jesus and decided now to trust Him. His whole life changed, and, from that point until his death at the age of 95, the Lord was the center of his life. Lost and found. The son is like J.C. Penny. He returns home and repents.

But the crucial question remains. Was the woman I was counseling right? Are some sins so deep that even the love of God cannot reach them? Is Clint Eastwood right? Is everyone guilty and no one forgiven? Does the Father really welcome sinners? Does He receive worldly sinners? Does He accept self-righteous sinners?

## WELCOME HOME!

Yes. Of course He does. Being welcomed home with open arms is exactly the point of Christ's parable. Now is the time to put your ears on the chest of Christ to hear the heartbeat of God—the heartbeat of your forgiving Father.

Head down and guilt stricken, the prodigal slumps home to the father. Head high, love motivated, the father sprints to his son, throws his arms around him, and kisses him repeatedly! This is so starkly different from the Middle Eastern expectation. Listen again to Ken Bailey's interview.

He asked them, "And what would happen if the boy came back home, penniless, hungry, and broken?" The Middle Eastern reply: "The father would certainly not run to him and receive him! The father would stay hidden for a while and make the son eat humble pie outside the gate of the village."

This is *not* what occurs in Jesus' story. The father, our Father, runs to his son. "Run" literally means to sprint to, to rush, and to race. He forgets his dignity. He forgets the insult and disrespect his son had shown him. He doesn't care what others might think. He doesn't care that his peers will call him an old fool. No! He just picks up his flowing robe and races to his son!

But we see something even before this. You caught it, didn't you? "But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him." How? Why? Jesus is painting a picture of a father who listens to every noise, every sound. "A traveler. Could it be my son?" He is vigilantly on the lookout. He hears that sound and his eyes spy out the terrain... "He's about his size, it might be him." But crestfallen day after day, because yet another traveler is not his son. Until today. Today his lost son is found, is resurrected. And he sprints to his son. In no other religion anywhere on the planet does one come to know God as the **Racing One** or the **Pursuing One**.

He does the same with the eldest son. Listen, “The older brother became angry and refused to go in. So his father went out and pleaded with him” (Luke 15:28). In no other religion anywhere in the world does one come to know God as the **Pleading One**; the **Wooing One**.

When you blow it yet again; when that besetting sin gets the best of you for the umpteenth time; when spiritual defeat seems your constant companion; when Satan convinces you that the Father is tired of you; then return to your pursuing Father, to the Racing One, the Pursuing One, to the Pleading One, the Wooing One. He’s the Father we each long for; the Father who wants us, welcomes us, and forgives us as He pursues us. Return to the Forgiving One.

Your forgiving Father also embraces you. The father sees his son, is filled with compassion, runs to him, throws his arms around him, and kisses him! This is not the biblical image of God that most committed Christians maintain. Somehow we have bought the lie that God is aloof, non-passionate, non-relational.

I have no recollection of my earthly father ever lavishing me with such a display of unshackled affection. I long for it, but it is foreign to me. So it seems strange for me to imagine the God of the universe racing to me impetuously, overjoyed and delighted to see me, falling down on my neck to embrace me, eagerly throwing Himself upon me, pressing His chest close to mine, and kissing me repeatedly—kissing me much, covering me with kisses. I don’t know about you, but I find this hard to fathom. When I’m honest, I can admit that I feel like my former counselee—some of my sins just seem too deep even for the love of God to reach them. I feel like Bill Munny—guilty but unforgiven.

But through this parable, Jesus is saying, “Look, look at the Father! Look at Him for the first time all over again. This is why I died. This is why I rose again. The Father longed to build a bridge over which He could run to you, and throw His arms around you, embracing you, encompassing, engulfing you with His forgiving love!”

## **YOUR FORGIVING FATHER CELEBRATES WITH YOU**

The greatest artist who ever lived readies His brush to paint the final scene in the greatest story ever told. It is the scene depicting our celebration with our forgiving Father. No less than ten times in this one chapter, we discover words for celebration. Tony Campolo is right when he proclaims that “the Kingdom of God is a party!” The Father is beside himself with glee. There is music and there is dancing.

Jesus paints His Father’s portrait in vivid, living colors. Splashes of joy here; gallons of cheer over there; broad-brush strokes of rejoicing all over the canvas. The father even tells the older son that they had to celebrate and be glad. There are

many things our sovereign God has to do, and celebration is certainly one of them. Our forgiving Father amazingly cannot contain His joy!

We're stunned at the thought that God has a good time. This party in Luke 15 stuns both sons. The younger son, the prodigal as we know him, is a lot like you and me. We mess up, and then we rehearse our imaginary dialogue in our minds – a dialogue of shame. The prodigal practices his speech all the way home. "I have sinned against you and I'm unworthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants."

He repeats it continuously like a mantra. The hired servants occupied the lowest rung on the relational totem poll of the day. The son is saying, "I am not only not worthy to be your son, I'm not worthy to be your slave, or your servant even. I am only worthy of being your temporary hired servant."

So ingrained is his unworthiness in his soul, that he gives his entire speech to his Father! His Father has raced out to him, is kissing him and celebrating over him, and this guy is still droning on with his speech. "I-----am-----not-----worthy . . ." The Father reacts! "Forget that! Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let's have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found. So they began to celebrate" (15:22-24).

The father is saying, "Let's party hardy! The guest of honor at my party is my son, not my hired servant." The Father prepares a celebration reserved for His most special of guests—you and me whenever we return home.

## WHOM DO I HAVE TO FORGIVE ME?

As you wait for the other shoe to drop, realize it already dropped on Christ. As you wait for the hammer to fall, realize it already fell on Christ. We are restored and as a result have peace with God. We are all prodigal sons and daughters, but are not disinherited. We have received our portion and misspent it, yet have not been denied re-entry to the Father's presence. There is no angel with a swinging fiery sword to keep us out. On the contrary, there is a huge "WELCOME HOME" banner out front.

Perhaps we could learn from one envious of us. Marghanita Laski, secular humanist and novelist, wrote just before her death in 1988, "What I envy most about you Christians is your forgiveness; I have nobody to forgive me."

Whenever we return home, we have Somebody to forgive us. Like a constant magnet, the forgiving heart of our Father draws us home, home to celebrate. Put your ear to the chest of Christ to hear the heartbeat of God, the heartbeat of your Forgiving Father.



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# SALVATION: FOR ALL OR THE FEW?

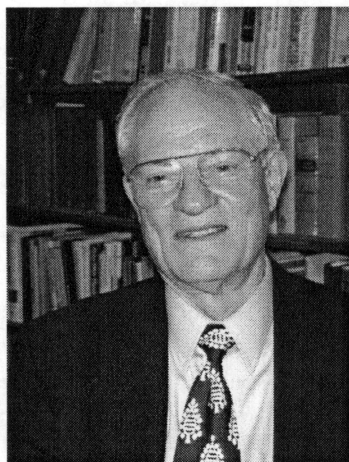
*by Dr. Thomas R. Edgar*

## INTRODUCTION

ONE OF THE most important messages Christianity proclaims is that Christ died for the entire human race and that anyone can put their trust in Him for salvation. The overall tenor of the Bible, as well as specific passages, teaches this concept. As a result, it is natural to pray for all to be saved.

Therefore, when we offer this prayer, we are praying according to God's will. However, some Christians teach that God does not *really* desire that all be saved. Hence, prayer for everyone's salvation is counter to God's will. Some go even further and do not invite the lost to believe in Christ. If this position is true then what originally seemed clear enough in the Scriptures may no longer be certain or proper.

Does God want everyone to be saved? Should we pray for the lost to be saved? Or is this praying against God's will? These are crucial questions. There are specific statements in the Bible that clearly advocate God's desire that all men be saved. One of the most widely known and most emphatic is 1 Timothy 2:4.



## CONTEXT OF I TIMOTHY 2: 4

In 1 Timothy chapter one, Paul reminds Timothy to command certain persons not to teach different doctrine, nor to heed it himself. He contrasts this false teaching with a dispensation of God, which emphasizes faith. The goal of Timothy's

command to them is love—which comes from a clean heart, a good conscience, and genuine faith (vv. 1-5).

However, some have left the basics of a clear conscience and genuine faith and instead are majoring in empty words. They desire to be “law teachers.” But in spite of their bold assertions, they do not understand the fundamental nature of the Law. The context reveals that Paul refers to the Mosaic Law (vv. 6, 7). He asserts that the Law is good if used lawfully; that is, in accordance with its basic purpose.

He then declares this fundamental purpose of the Law by expressly stating that the Law is not given for the righteous, but for the unrighteous. Hence, the fundamental aspect of the Law that these self-appointed “law teachers” do not understand is that the Law is not intended for believers (vv. 8-11). In numerous passages, Paul teaches that the Mosaic Law was done away in Christ.

In contrast to this false, law-oriented teaching, Paul strongly asserts that God saved him by grace and not by works, but by faith. Paul asserts that his own salvation is a pattern for all those who are to be saved (vv. 12-17). He introduces his own testimony to emphasize that a proper ministry is oriented to the Gospel, not the Law. Paul concludes chapter 1 by mentioning two men who have gone astray on these very matters and the consequent need to discipline them (vv. 19, 20).

## THE IMMEDIATE CONTEXT: CHAPTER TWO

Chapter two begins with “therefore,” showing that Paul’s following instructions for the members of the church are building on the concepts previously stated in chapter one. The first instructions concern the believers in a general sense. Because of these false teachers who are departing from the concept of faith and the Gospel, Paul reiterates that men are only saved by responding in faith to the Gospel and urges that prayer be made for “all men” (v. 1).

The term translated “men” is often generic for “persons,” and is not the specific term for males as in verse eight. In addition to prayer for all persons, he adds a specific prayer request for those in authority (v. 2). This additional prayer for the authorities is specifically that believers may have peaceful circumstances wherein they can lead godly lives. Referring to these prayer requests, Paul immediately continues that, “This is good and acceptable before God our Savior, Who desires that all persons be saved and come to know the truth” (v. 4).

The evangelistic stress of these prayers is a stated inference from chapter one. It is even clearer in these following verses. Paul states that these prayers are pleasing to God, Who “desires everyone to be saved.” As individual persons, the authorities are already included under the prayer for all persons to be saved. The prayer request for the authorities is specific and only appropriate for “authorities.” These facts reveal that the specific prayer for the authorities is additional to that in verse one (v. 2). The context signifies that this additional request also must have an evan-

gelistic aspect. The decisions of authorities affect the quality of our routine lives. The purpose of this prayer is that the circumstances of our lives may be tranquil and conducive both to godliness and testimony. Thus, this is not merely general prayer for holiness but has a very specific focus in this context; that conditions be prone to evangelism.

Paul continues stressing the evangelistic motivation. God desires *all* persons to be saved because there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, Christ Jesus. He gave Himself to be a ransom for *all*. Thus, in this context, the stated reason for the prayer for *all* men is because God desires that *all* men be saved.

The entire context directly promotes the normal interpretation of 1 Tim 2:4. The verse is clear and straightforward. It explicitly declares that God desires that all persons be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. Nothing in the passage presents the slightest hindrance to this interpretation. Most interpreters, including many of deterministic persuasion, recognize this and interpret it accordingly as “all persons.”

Nevertheless, the idea that God desires all men to be saved runs counter to the theology that teaches that Christ died only for the elect, and to the concept that God only desires that some, “the elect,” be saved and therefore God cannot desire all men to be saved. Consequently, they must interpret this passage differently than one would expect. There are three common ways this is done.

The first way to limit the meaning of this verse is to claim that the word “all” in 1 Tim 2:4 means “all kinds” rather than “all.” The verse would then mean that God “desires all kinds of men to be saved.” Though, by “all kinds,” this interpretation definitely does not mean all or even most persons, but only some from all categories or “kinds.” The interpretation, “all kinds,” although generally rejected, is an old, relatively common interpretation.

Another approach is to admit that “all men” does mean all, but only refers to the elect. Therefore, the verse means that God desires “all the elect” to be saved.

Others use a third approach. They admit that “all men” means all men and that God does desire in a surface way that all be saved. Yet, they declare that His real, secret desire is different. According to His real desire, God only wants the elect to be saved. These efforts to read a different meaning into the text than what would normally be read seems to be more theological than exegetical in its basis.

## A COMMON PHILOSOPHICAL STUMBLING BLOCK

There is a common philosophical concept that causes many to avoid the plain meaning of this verse. This is the belief that whatever God wants to happen will occur. Therefore, if God desires all to be saved then so it will be. Since universalism is contrary to the Bible, the proponents of this view conclude that the stated meaning of 1 Tim 2:4 cannot be correct. We must clearly understand what they are

saying—that whatever God desires has to happen because He desires it. They deny that God can desire something and not cause it to happen.

Although this may sound honoring to God, this assumption has several serious flaws. This supposition not only denies man the freedom of choice regarding salvation but also denies God the freedom of choice regarding *how* He accomplishes it. According to this concept, God cannot allow man the freedom to choose contrary to what God desires, even if He so desires. This is a philosophical argument, not a biblical one. In actuality it is both self-contradictory and denies the sovereignty of God.

The concept itself is self-contradictory because it argues that God (even if He desires to allow man freedom of choice) cannot do as He desires and allow man to choose contrary to His desires. In this way, it is logically self-contradictory since God's desire in this case will not come to pass. Additionally, the proponents have removed God's freedom of choice and have limited His sovereignty by making Him subject to determinism.

Some deny God's sovereignty more directly by declaring that God *cannot* allow man to make the choice. The issue in this assertion is not whether God does allow man this choice, but that God cannot allow it. This option is excluded on the basis of philosophy before any interpretation of biblical passages begins. It is not unusual for some to state this more radically to the effect that God could not be God if He allowed man to make the choice. This relatively common statement regards God's deity as contingent upon His actions.

God's deity seems contingent upon the interpreter's opinion of what God can and cannot do. But, if God cannot allow man to make the choice for his salvation, then God is not free to do as He pleases. He is not sovereign and is subject to the principle of determinism just as we are. "Determinism" is one of the present expressions for unconditional (arbitrary) predestination, and is a common philosophical concept that occurs in various religions.

Deterministic Christians may be the most vocal about the sovereignty of God. However, this does not mean they actually believe in God's sovereignty any more than the non-determinists. Anyone who denies that God *can* allow man to make the choice for his salvation by this very denial also denies God's sovereignty. It is logically impossible, therefore, to believe in the unlimited sovereignty of God and simultaneously believe that He cannot allow man the freedom to choose. To think this way is to believe that God's sovereignty is limited so that He does not have the freedom to allow man a choice.

Often, those using the term "sovereignty," in actuality mean God's "determinism." By "sovereignty," they are voicing their opinion that God always acts deterministically. Thus, determinism is sovereign and God is subject to it. It was necessary to refute the invalid nature of this belief. Because this philosophical view

has so often interfered with an objective interpretation of this biblical text, it was necessary that it be addressed before we approach 1Tim 2:4.

## LIMITING INTERPRETATIONS: DOES “ALL” MEAN “A FEW”?

The three alternative interpretations limit the meaning of 1Tim 2:4 and deny its normative meaning. A common approach is to admit that “all persons” does mean everyone, but to assert that this is only God’s surface will. His “real” will is opposed to this idea. 1Tim 2:4 is generally understood as referring to God’s *desire*. Those who hold to this alternate interpretation frequently shift during the discussion to a conclusion regarding God’s *will*. They usually regard God’s *will* as His intention rather than mere desire.

This distinction is actually based on a difference in the English language more than in the Greek language. The word *thelo*, used in 1Tim 2:4, means “to want” or “desire.” It has the same meaning as the English word, “to desire.” However, in certain theologically significant passages, the Greek word is sometimes translated as “will,” in the sense of intention rather than desire. Yet, it is usually translated as “desire” in this verse, since most do not feel that God *intends* all to be saved. A study of the biblical passages where *thelo* is sometimes translated as “will” reveals that they can just as readily be translated as “desire.”

Since the lexical meaning of *thelo* can just as easily be “desire,” that meaning should be utilized where this common meaning fits. For example, Rom 9:18 is often translated as God “shows mercy on whom He wills.” But it can just as readily mean God “shows mercy on whom He desires.” The latter is the better translation since it keeps the certain nuance of the word rather than reading in a nuance of intention or purpose.

It is also unjustified to argue for the meaning in 1Tim 2:4 starting with the accepted meaning “desire,” only to then shift the meaning during the discussion from “desire” to an English word with the nuance of intentional “will.” *Thelo* certainly has the nuance “to desire” in 1Tim 2:4. There is no basis in this passage to argue for a distinction between God’s will and His desire. Therefore, any distinction between two “wills” of God based on 1Tim 2:4 can be at most merely an unjustified and arbitrarily imposed distinction between two levels of desire. According to this interpretation, one of God’s desires or wills is real and the other is only shallow or in some sense not His real desire. Nothing in this passage even suggests that there is a “real will” of God that differs from His desire (will) stated in the passage.

On the positive side, this interpretation attempts to give credence to the biblical text and recognizes that the only justifiable interpretation of “all men” is “all” in the sense of everyone. No limitation is placed on the meaning of “all.” Yet without any basis in the passage, a limitation is placed on the meaning of “desires” that accomplishes the same result.

In effect, this view means that their total depravity, their total inability to believe, is not what keeps people from being saved. What keeps people from being saved is neither their sin, nor the fact that they deserve hell, since the elect also have these same problems. Consequently, according to this theological position, even though Christ has already paid the price for their salvation, God does not want the non-elect to be saved.

First, there is absolutely nothing in 1 Tim 2: 4 to indicate that this verse refers to less than God's true desire. The idea that God has a secret will that differs from what appears on the surface is common among determinists. This is sometimes understood not merely as a secret will that appears to contradict biblical passages but may actually contradict them. According to this concept *God will ultimately act in accordance with this secret will, even if it is contradictory to the normal meaning*. This is clearly the case in this interpretation of 1 Tim 2: 4. This concept of a revealed will of God that may not agree with God's real will is completely contrary to the biblical testimony of God as one who does not lie and is completely trustworthy.

Another common view interprets 1 Tim 2: 4 as meaning that God desires "all the elect" to be saved. There are several difficulties with this. The Greek word *pas* does not mean "all the elect" but "all." Nothing in the context limits the discussion to the "elect."

This also results in an innocuous statement. The "elect," according to this thinking, are arbitrarily chosen and saved by God apart from anything other than God's predetermined action. It would therefore be pointless to tell believers to pray because God wants all the elect to be saved (as if there is some other possibility) as if some might not be saved.

Since, according to this view, "all" in verse one is usually understood in the same way, it would also mean that believers are to pray for all the elect. But how is the believer to know who is elect? Finally, most interpreters agree that "all" in verse two is used inclusively for all rulers, not only for the elect among the rulers. Thus "all" should mean the same thing in both passages.

Another common interpretation is that 1 Tim 2:4 means God desires "all kinds of men" to be saved. A recent commentary presents this view and barely mentions other views. By "all kinds" they do not mean a great many as in the English idiom "All kinds of people were there." This is another way of saying, "only the elect." To fit with the meaning of the Greek word "all" it means all kinds in the sense every kind; some from each kind. This is how this interpretation is used and explained by its proponents.

Several arguments are used to support this interpretation. It is argued that there are uses of *pas* that are not absolute in the sense that every last individual is meant. For instance, when a passage says that the whole city came out to hear Jesus, this does not necessarily mean that absolutely every last individual came out.



Another argument states that the meaning “all kinds” does occur in some passages for *pas*, “all.”

A prevalent argument from the passage for the meaning “all kinds” is that verse two of this passage refers to rulers, a class of persons; thus, the use of “all” in verse one also must refer to classes or kinds. This meaning is then also carried from *pas*, “all,” in verse one to the same word in verse four.

How does the possibility that a few other passages may use “all” in a sense that does not include absolutely every last individual have any bearing on this passage? Furthermore, how can this “non-absolute” usage that means “almost everyone,” or everyone in a practical sense, provide any evidence for an entirely different meaning such as “all kinds”? A non-absolute use of “all” is a commonly recognized usage in Greek and also in English. However, the non-absolute meaning is just that; it is not used in either language to mean a small percentage or a minority of the group in question. Therefore, this argument can never support referring this passage to a minority such as the elect out of a group.

But this is the intention of this interpretation. Admittedly, “all” may not be absolutely all in every instance, but may be used in a hyperbolic sense just as in English. Still, this furnishes no evidence that it means “all kinds.” Nor is it evidence that it ever means anything less than an overwhelming majority, nor that it ever means a minority such as the “elect.” Neither is it any evidence that “all” in 1Tim 2:4 means anything other than absolutely all. In other words, “all” means “all.”

Many of the passages quoted for non-absolute use of “all” are interpreted based on the opinion that it would be impossible for someone like Paul to evangelize every person in the world. How can this apply here? Is God limited so that He cannot desire for every individual to be saved? Even Paul could *desire* everyone to be saved.

A more direct argument is the assertion that in a few occurrences the word means all kinds rather than all. As support, a few instances (perhaps ten instances out of the approximately 1,283 occurrences of *pas* in the New Testament) are presented, depending on the interpreter. But, this means that it would very seldom be used with this meaning. Accordingly, even if all of the alleged instances were valid, there would be little likelihood of this meaning in this passage. It should never be a consideration apart from strong evidence in the context. More revealing is the fact that a study of these alleged instances of the meaning “all kinds” reveals that they are questionable.

The verse that is perhaps most commonly presented as evidence for the meaning “all kinds” is 1 Tim 6:10. This is often translated as, “The love of money is the root of all evil.” Some disagree, arguing that money is not the root of every evil. Therefore, this should read, “The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.” However, there is no article with the word “root.” So the verse can easily be

translated as, "The love of money is *a* root of all evil." There is no need to read in a precarious meaning such as "all kinds."

Another verse frequently used as an example is Matt 4:23 which states that Jesus healed "all diseases." It is argued that Jesus could not have healed every known disease so this must mean "all kinds." However, the expression "all diseases" has a meaning appropriate to the context. Jesus healed all the diseases of those who came to be healed.

Consider this from another perspective. Does it seem plausible that Matthew means "all kinds" as these interpreters intend the meaning in 1Tim 2:1, 4? Is it likely that Matthew describes Jesus as healing a few from each category while bypassing the great majority? This would certainly be a less impressive miracle than healing everyone who came. In fact, it would give the impression that Jesus could not heal most of those who came. Finally, in the passages where Paul uses "all," and specifically refers to groups or classes, he uses it in an inclusive sense; that is, all including everyone in the groups mentioned, not just an elect few out of each group.

The next argument is not based on a use of "all" but an alleged parallel in the context. Since verse two refers to those in authority; that is, to a class of persons, this is used to argue for "kinds" in verse one. However, the fact that a group is named in the next verse does not mean that this must also be read into the previous verse. Further, interpreters agree that the group in verse two is *all* authorities rather than some of each kind of authority. Prayer for a small percentage of each kind of authority such as the elect would scarcely produce the desired effect on the circumstances of life. Therefore, the word "all" can hardly mean "all kinds" in verse two, but means all-inclusive.

Thus, if such a parallel does exist, the group in verse one would be all men rather than a small percent of various kinds of men. The argument for classes or kinds based on the reference to rulers in verse two is valueless in itself. The Greek construction is no different than a similar statement in English to the effect that "All dogs must have a license, pit bulls must be on a leash." The fact that the second statement refers to a specific kind of dog does not even imply that the first statement does not refer to all dogs but only to classes.

In fact, the opposite is true. A construction such as this reinforces the meaning of "all" in the first statement as meaning "all" inclusive by adding a *separate* requirement for the specific category, pit bulls. Obviously the pit bulls are required to have a license. Thus they are included as individual dogs under the term "all dogs" in the first statement. The same holds true for 1 Tim 2:1-4. The additional requirement for the authorities reinforces the fact that they were included as individuals under the first general prayer request; that is, the first statement refers to all, including those in authority. Also, according to this interpretation the passage

would be *stressing* prayer for every kind or class of person. How is the believer to know all the kinds?

The meaning “all kinds” is at best an uncertain meaning for “all” in any passage. That “all kinds” is an alleged *possible* meaning for the Greek word in a few passages does not make it a *probable* meaning in 1Tim 2:4. There is not the least evidence from the passage to call for its occurrence here. Instead, there is a great amount of evidence to support the normal meaning, “all.”

## PAUL’S ARGUMENT AS EVIDENCE

There is a very obvious contextual problem with taking “all men” in 1Tim 2:4 as “all kinds of men.” When Paul makes a statement he supports it. For example, when he says that there is no difference, for all have sinned and lack the glory of God (Rom 3:23) he specifies that “all” includes all in the two categories, both Jews and Gentiles. Everything in the context from Rom 1:18 through 11:34 supports his reference to these categories. There are also explicit statements about this in the immediate context. The entire discussion is oriented to proving his point regarding categories, Jews and Gentiles. Furthermore, when Paul refers to all, he means all in each category.

If 1Tim 2:4 means that God desires all kinds of men to be saved, then by its very content this verse would be *emphatically stressing* the idea of kinds or categories. But nothing in the context of 1Tim 2:4 supports categories or kinds as opposed to individuals. This alone is sufficient to show that the interpretation “all kinds” is highly improbable. Together with the fact that “all kinds” is an uncertain meaning for any occurrence of the word, and is at best an extremely rare usage, there is no justification for interpreting this passage as “all kinds.” The final blow to this improbable interpretation is that the normal meaning for the term as “all” or “everyone” fits perfectly in the passage.

## ADDITIONAL SUPPORT FOR “ALL”

In this same epistle there is additional support for the concept that God desires all to be saved. 1Tim 4:10 very clearly says that God is *the Savior of all men*, especially of those who believe. God is described as the Savior of all. Since the statement, “especially of those who believe” is added, the “all” includes those who do not believe and not just the elect. Some have argued that “Savior” is used in a general sense to refer to the blessings or common grace that God shows to all men. But this does not fit with any normal meaning for “Savior.”

In this verse, the term “Savior” must have the same meaning for both of the beneficiaries, for “all men” and for “those who believe,” although to a greater degree for those who believe. Since it must be in the same category for both groups

but still be special for believers, it can hardly be common grace or some general blessings given to all mankind. It means Savior as the provider of salvation. 1Tim 4:10 is additional support that when Paul refers to salvation and relates this to all persons, he relates this to everyone.

Another verse in the Pastoral Epistles, Titus 2:11 states that the saving grace of God was manifested to all men. Many prefer to translate this as “God’s grace which brings salvation to all men was manifested.” In either case the salvation is in some way for all. 2 Cor 5:14 is parallel to 1Tim 4:10. It says, “One died for all; therefore, all died, and He died for all in order that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for Him who died and was raised.” This verse says that Christ died for all and so all died, showing that not only did Christ die for all, but also that His death in some way affected all.

In Rom 2:3-4, Paul addresses an individual (who is clearly not a believer, nor one of the “elect”) to demonstrate that the person is lost and under God’s condemnation just as much as the “heathen” in Rom 1:18-31. Paul, having shown in chapter 1 the condition of the world in general as under God’s wrath, now shows that the Jew is just as much an object of God’s wrath. Hence, this entire discussion is to show that the man being discussed is lost and not right with God. Thus, he is not regarded as one of the “elect.” Paul says, “Do you despise God’s goodness, forbearance and long-suffering, because you are ignorant of the fact that God’s goodness leads you to repentance?” These verses declare that God deals with the unsaved in forbearance and kindness *in order to lead them to repentance*.

Another well known verse by Peter is 2 Pet 3:9, which directly parallels Paul’s statements in Rom 2:3-4. Here Peter states, “The Lord is not procrastinating regarding His promise as some consider delay, but is longsuffering toward you, since He does not desire any to perish but that all come to repentance.” The manuscripts are divided between “toward you” and “toward us.” As in Rom 2:3-4, this verse explains why God delays the end and punishment. Both passages use the same term for “longsuffering.” God is longsuffering and allows life to continue because He desires all to repent. Not only is 2 Pet 3:9 stated in decidedly inclusive terms, but also the parallel with Rom 2:3-4 shows that this applies to everyone. Peter agrees with Paul that God desires all persons to be saved.

## CONCLUSION

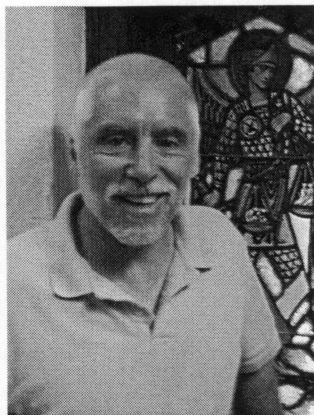
In 1Tim 2:1-4 Paul states, “Therefore, pray for all persons. Pray in addition for those in authority that we may have a peaceful life conducive to godliness and testimony. This is pleasing to God who desires that everyone be saved.” We should not hesitate to pray for the lost to be saved. 1Tim 2:1-4 teaches that we should pray for everyone. This exhortation is related to evangelism and expressly states that such prayer is pleasing to God. It very explicitly asserts that God desires the

salvation of all persons. There is no justification for interpreting it other than according to its normal meaning. We should be thankful that our God, Who is truly sovereign and able to do as He pleases, desires all to be saved. Do not be hesitant to pray for all persons, since this is pleasing to God.

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## GETTING THE BIBLE INTO THE HEART: REFLECTIONS ON PSALM 119:71

*by Rev. Dave Shive*



AS A YOUNG student arriving at the Washington Bible College campus in January 1965, I noticed with youthful casualness the school slogan: “The Bible in the heart, the heart of service.” Edward Collamore, one of the eventual founding fathers of the Washington Bible College, originated that catchphrase in 1917 as part of his “Home Bible Study Courses” program.

“Of course,” I cheerily thought upon seeing the slogan, “That’s a good motto for a Bible college.” I was young and the world was my oyster. Deep questions about our school slogan did not plague me at the time. Not being overly concerned about how the

Bible came to be in the heart, I also had no profound thoughts as to what would happen once the Bible was actually in my heart. At the time I was content to probe no further; it was enough that our beloved school had such a motto and that it had George Miles’ endorsement.

Now writing 37 years later, I am a seasoned veteran of life and ministry with some hard-earned insight into the motto that has guided our schools for all these years. The questions that never came to mind in those early days are now a matter of serious inquiry and ongoing reflection. How does the Bible transform our hearts into hearts of service?

Allow me to give two illustrations that explain how I have gained understanding into our school’s slogan. First, in a pastorate I once served, I received a phone call from a distraught mother. She and her husband were in the intensive care unit of the local hospital. While playing in the backyard, their beautiful 5-year old son had tangled a rope around his neck and the oxygen and blood supply to his brain



had been cut off. Severely brain-damaged, their beloved son soon died in the hospital. It was my duty to comfort the parents, offer hope to all involved, and try to make sense of God's mysterious ways to those who were drowning in grief.

I will never be able to adequately articulate the agony of those moments. Loving parents stood by the casket of their adorable little son, straightening his clothes and smoothing his hair one last time before the casket lid was shut. My eyes clouded with tears and my voice quivered as I sought to bring the hope of the Gospel to people whose faith was being severely tested. What I didn't realize was that, at that moment, we were learning the Word of God in the most extraordinary classroom God has ever used—the school of suffering.

Second, in a previous pastorate I was taught the intimate nature of hardship when I came under relentless criticism. This time it was personal. I was not trying to comfort or counsel another member of the congregation who was wrestling with life's twists and turns. I was the one who was suffering, and I had no personal pastor to comfort me. I didn't understand how I could be the object of such a barrage of condemnation. When I eventually left that church, I carried with me an enormous weight of anger, bitterness, and hurt. I spent much of the following years in recovery from that deep valley. More importantly, as the wounds healed I was surprised to discover that the painful experience had actually taken me to a deeper level of understanding of God's Word.

These illustrations do not summarize the whole chronicle of my life, nor does every life follow the same pattern. Such stories merely serve as examples of things that can befall a believer in Christ. Pain has many levels. For instance, we know that the normal difficulties of life will generally afflict everybody: flat tire, hacking cough, burnt dinner, misplaced eyeglasses, and a furnace that breaks on the coldest day of the year.

But for others, hardship can exact a greater toll: loss of job, struggling marriage, automobile accident, or the death of an aging parent. And then there are some who experience a level of misery that seems to exceed what the human frame can bear: the death of a child, loss of a spouse in early marriage, a paralyzed spouse, bankruptcy, a son killed in battle, discovery of a brain tumor, or the flagrant prodigalism of a beloved son or daughter. Now imagine the irritated reaction of the anguished when exposed to Psalm 119:71. Here are the psalmist's words with which we must wrestle: "It is good that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Your statutes" (Ps. 119:71).

Perhaps your spouse has just passed away after a long illness, or you have declared bankruptcy after all other options have failed. Maybe your adult child has just told you that he doesn't believe the Bible. Possibly the church you are pastoring has just split, and you are unemployed. You may not be interested in hearing the words, "Your affliction is good because you are learning God's Word."

Sometimes the Bible's response to suffering can seem naïve and superficial, the psalmist's comment (119:71) appearing unsophisticated at best and cruel at worst. What could have been on the psalmist's mind when he wrote that it is good that he was made miserable? Did a disease afflict him? Had his best friend betrayed him, or had he agonized through a frightening circumstance where his life was threatened, but he had emerged unscathed? Maybe the torment of abandonment by his spouse or seeing his home engulfed in flames had been his teacher?

We simply do not know the author of Psalm 119 or the circumstances out of which he wrote. But we do know the compelling question with which he forces his readers to wrestle: "Am I able to recognize suffering as 'good' if such hardship will take me deeper into the beloved Word of God?"

The allusion to affliction in verse 71 is not the Psalm's only effort to address that topic. In the same stanza, we find "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your Word" (vs. 67). Other allusions to hardship in Ps. 119 include: "This is my comfort in my affliction, that Your word has revived me" (vs. 50); "...in faithfulness you have afflicted me" (vs. 75); "... I would have perished in my affliction" (vs. 92); "I am exceedingly afflicted..." (vs. 107); and "Look upon my affliction and rescue me..." (vs. 153). In fact, this particular Hebrew word for affliction is used 55 times in Psalms, being variously translated "afflicted, humble, lowly, meek, oppressed, poor, travail, and chastened." So what are we to make of the apparently simplistic and seemingly unsophisticated statement, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I may learn Your statutes"?

Following are eight observations on the nature of learning that Psalm 119:71 and its surrounding context convey. First, and most important, *THE VALUE OF AFFLICTION CAN ONLY BE ASSESSED IN LIGHT OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE OBJECTIVE*. Were I to make a statement such as, "It is good that thugs beat me up on the street," one would think I was daft until I completed the thought with "because that thrashing enabled me to meet my future wife who was working as a nurse in the hospital." The completed pronouncement immediately enables one to understand what is valued most. My wife is so priceless to me that a good whipping in a back alley is tolerable if it gave me the opportunity to meet her. So, a radical statement such as "It is good that I have been afflicted" can only be properly measured by the value system of the writer and the objective achieved by the suffering.

In the psalmist's case, the result of the process of affliction is that he better understood God's law. Expressed *literarily*, 119:71 is delightfully crafted poetry. Articulated *propositionally*, Ps. 119:71 demonstrates the relationship between affliction and learning. Stated *passionately*, this verse expressively portrays the acceptability of extreme suffering if it draws one nearer to one's lover, God's Word. Declared *experientially*, it is the wise utterance of the seasoned veteran who, with a repertoire of his many troubles to recall, has learned to welcome the master teacher, affliction.

If God's law is as precious as the psalmist has estimated, surely an extended dose of affliction is small price to pay to better understand it. Who would not endure enormous measures of hardship were one assured that the experience would yield great insights into the most important truth in the universe, the mind of God?

This principle is the most critical aspect of the psalm. If it is missed, the importance of the great psalm and its delightful literary crafting will merely seem like the invention of a rhymester with too much time on his hands. In his lyrical masterpiece we learn that the psalmist has discovered what every human being longs to embrace – the pearl of great price. Born with the capacity to pursue and enjoy the highest and the noblest of all elements, we struggle to discover that to which we shall devote our lives. What is of such value that we dare hold nothing in reserve in quest of it? For some it may be career, education, family, health, or a legacy.

For the psalmist the pearl of great price was God's Word. For Edward Colamore and George Miles, the treasure of immense worth was the Bible in the heart. Once that conviction has been established, no pain is too great, no hardship too inconvenient, no good thing can stand in the way of the noble quest to abide in and obey God's law.

Liberation is the discovery of the single overarching purpose for one's existence. For in that breakthrough comes deliverance from lesser things. While each believer might order his or her "*raison d'être*" differently (some might devote their life to evangelism, missions, teaching, or worship as their pearl of great price), the costly prize of God's eternal Word must somehow be a dimension of each life mission. Discovered and embraced, such a single-minded passion for a priceless lover emancipates the believer from minor callings and petty hobbies. Those who absorb the great Psalm's passion for the Law of God will find release from the trivialities of this temporal existence to expend one's very life for that which will never pass away: "...Every one of Your righteous ordinances is everlasting" (Ps. 119:160).

Second, even though the word good is rarely used to describe affliction, it is apparent that the author of this psalm has learned that trouble has positive dimensions. Certain segments of the population may read Scripture and conclude that the Bible teaches us that *all* affliction or suffering is bad, certainly to be avoided, or even emanating from Satan. However Psalm 119:71 and the other six verses in the great Psalm that address affliction contest such a conclusion.

Like the Apostle Paul, who seems to briefly lose his mind when he says, "I am overflowing with joy in all our affliction" (2 Cor. 7:4), the psalmist initially gives the impression of emotional imbalance when he extols the goodness of suffering. But what appears at first glance to be insanity, literary hyperbole, or unwise enthusiasm is actually consistent with what we know of sacrifice. "Much pain, great gain" is the psalmist's perspective. Similarly, the statement "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I keep Your Word" (Ps. 119:67) parallels verse 71. Know-

ing and obeying God's law are so important that one could say affliction is good if it brings enlightenment in spiritual truth. Just as I might say, "It is good that I did those sit-ups every day and jogged a mile three times a week so that I might stay in good physical condition," so the psalmist is at his sanest when he lauds the importance of affliction and the good results that it engenders.

Third, we can observe that the seven "affliction statements" made by the great Psalm concerning the positive value of suffering are best appreciated *after* affliction has accomplished its objective. Of these seven verses, five (verses 50, 67, 71, 75, 92) view suffering in the past tense. With a cache of suffering experiences under his belt, the psalmist can now put adversity into proper perspective and proclaim the value of the experience of affliction. To extol the virtues of suffering *before* undergoing affliction can be mere bravado. To praise adversity *while* one is experiencing it is contrary to human nature. After all, who among us is so spiritually noble and altruistic as to declare the high value of affliction while we are under its heavy hand? The human instinct is to seek deliverance from the awful burden of hardship, not to revel in its magnificence! But reflection *backward* on affliction shows the altered outlook of the sufferer. When it comes to affliction, suffering looks much different to the "Monday morning quarterback" because hindsight is truly the best perspective.

Fourth, the psalmist is not using this verse as leverage to shame the afflicted into a change of attitude toward affliction. In keeping with Paul's admonition that we should be content to weep with those who weep (Rom. 12:15), Psalm 119:71 is not a verse to bludgeon the mourner out of grief and into joy. Since it is usually impossible to see the value of suffering while in the midst of it, informing a sufferer that affliction is good will likely be a message that cannot be welcomed until after the suffering has abated. No, these words are for the sufferer's consolation, not sermon fodder for the bystander.

During one excruciating season of church strife, I had taken a secular job to provide for my family. When asked how things were going I sought to be grateful for the income, while also honestly confessing that my current job was not enjoyable. One day in church I was confronted by a well-meaning acquaintance who, like one of Job's friends, admonished me that I was setting a poor example for other believers whenever I implied that my job was less than pleasant. I remember at the time being puzzled by the seeming contradiction between his desire for me to be sincere and his simultaneous aversion to my honesty. I also remember thinking, "You're right. I'm not being grateful but I really don't think I can give thanks at the moment. Maybe later."

While my friend was right, he was wrong. It is generally not wise to tell a sufferer how he ought to behave in the midst of suffering. Wise friends will suffer in partnership with acquaintances, saving the counsel for the right time and the right place (usually afterward rather than in midstream). So Psalm 119:71 is not

primarily intended for someone in the midst of affliction. For such circumstances, other portions of God's Word (e.g., Psalm 88, a melancholic psalm that has no words of encouragement) may be implemented. Are not the misery portions of the Scriptures intended for this purpose, to actually encourage the brokenhearted and downtrodden while in the midst of their affliction? Psalm 119:71 assures us that the best time to celebrate the greatness of affliction most likely will be in its aftermath.

Fifth, two of the seven affliction verses in Psalm 119 (verses 107 and 153) view distress as a present experience. Here the psalmist cries out during suffering, and we are surprised to learn that the pristine worth of the law of God is not forgotten, even while the pain of affliction is present. How remarkable that adversity is not only appreciated with hindsight; there can be encouragement and comfort from the Word of God for the sufferer while in the midst of great difficulties.

In the disastrous church experiences that I survived as a pastor, I did not always respond with grace and mercy to my adversaries. However, I do remember doing one thing well when darkness descended on my life and ministry; I stayed absorbed with Scripture. No matter how dismal my circumstances and no matter how hopeless my cause appeared to be, I rose daily to spend time in God's Word. Though I would only realize later just what great benefit I was deriving out of these consistent forays into Scripture, I nevertheless sensed that God's Word was reviving, renewing, and sustaining me. I frequently pleaded with God, "I am exceedingly afflicted; revive me, O Lord, according to Your Word" (Ps. 119:107). I would later find myself acknowledging, "If Your law had not been my delight, then I would have perished in my affliction" (Ps. 119:92).

Sixth, the Law of God demands response from its readers. Terms such as "listen, keep, and obey" instruct the reader of the surpassing value of responding to the Word of God. The Bible teaches us and also calls for us to take action. It was written as a practical call to godly action, and not just something to be read and ignored.

If we truly understand the nature of authentic learning, we may realize that the noblest response to God's law is to apply what we have learned to our lives. Psalm 119 perceives the concept of learning the Law of God as the highest of virtues. Thirteen times in this psalm the normal Hebrew root for "learn" or "teach" is used to describe the most profound activity in which the believer can engage.

In Ps. 119:71, the result of affliction is learning of God's statutes. Though the psalm praises Scripture repeatedly, the psalmist is not content to merely laud the Word of God with reverential adjectives. My wife will be pleased by my nice words about her lovely hair, attractive wardrobe, pleasing personality, delicious meals, and meticulous homemaking. But it is my more active and aggressive offerings of loving actions (such as washing the dishes after a dinner, taking time to listen, taking her out to dinner on occasion, or carrying the trash out to the curb) that



most eloquently express my love for her. These tangible actions on my part serve to convey a message of love and affection that words alone do not express.

So, the psalmist's vocabulary that articulates high praise for God's Law does not alter the fact that respect for God's Word is more than a prodigious glossary of adjectives. A biblical response to God's Word will be seen in actions appropriate to one's lexicon of accolades. The priceless response that God's Law evokes from the faithful is learning and gratitude for the education received.

Today there are evangelical churches that diminish the value of the study of God's Word. However, our theological forefathers considered the pursuit of theology to be "the queen of the sciences." Even Jewish culture esteemed the study of the Torah above all other activities. In Hebrew, the words for learn and teach have the same root. Devotion to learning was elevated above virtually every quality so that the very document that serves as the foundational teachings on the Torah is called *The Talmud*, meaning literally "the learning" or "the teaching."

This psalm portrays a popular thought from this pragmatic era that surviving affliction was more important than learning from it. But the psalmist does not say that it is good that he learned God's statutes so that he could endure affliction, thereby emphasizing the priority of endurance of affliction and presenting a pragmatic view of learning. Such an approach would imply that learning is a means to the end of surviving affliction (a sentiment found in Ps. 119:92) but one that should not be the primary purpose for learning.

Instead he declares, "It is good that I endured affliction so that I could learn Your statutes" thereby placing the premium on learning and elevating edification of the mind and heart over expediency. While it is true that learning God's Word may fortify the saint to better tolerate affliction, the psalmist prefers to tell us that the enduring of affliction will provide the proper laboratory conditions for enhanced learning of God's Law. Learned sufferers have no tolerance for the minimizing of education in the things of God.

It is noteworthy that the learning that the psalmist is contemplating is not mere intellectual head knowledge but an agent of life transformation. This knowledge transforms the heart and mind. It changes the mind into an agent of wisdom and the heart into an instrument of obedience. Learning in the crucible of affliction changes lives by drawing us closer to God and inculcating a desire for more godly lives.

Seventh, it is sheer brilliance to suggest that affliction is good. This idea must surely be rooted in something outside of the normalcy of human experience. Suffering teaches us to measure the worth of affliction by a different yardstick. During my first semester of college I found myself in a difficult set of circumstances. I was attending a very conservative southern Christian college and, quite simply, I could not stay out of trouble. Eventually my troubles mounted to such a crescendo that I was broken. I fell before God and, for the first time in my Christian life, I



experienced true revival. Fortunately I was led to leave that school at the end of the semester, matriculating at Washington Bible College in the spring of 1965. But I cannot look back at the misery of that short time without saying, “It was good that I got in a lot of trouble that first semester of college, for God used that valley to teach me great spiritual truths.”

Even in the same stanza as verse 71, the psalmist gives a parallel sentiment, “You are good and do good; teach me Your statutes” (Ps. 119:68). Juxtaposed to verse 71, this comment is striking. The very goodness of God and the goodness of His acts prompt a simple request, “Teach me!” God’s goodness is a most straightforward and foundational principle, repeatedly declared by the psalmist (e.g., Ps. 25:8; 86:5; 100:5; 106:1; 107:1; 136:1). In Psalm 119, the goodness of being afflicted (v. 71) as explained by God is good (v. 68)! As Brother Lawrence is reported to have written:

*Good when He gives, supremely good;  
Nor less when He denies:  
Afflictions, from His sovereign hand,  
Are blessings in disguise.*

God’s goodness means that He teaches. “Could a God be considered good,” we ask “if He refused to share His knowledge and wisdom with His creatures?” As David notes, “Good and upright is the LORD; therefore, He instructs sinners in the way” (Ps. 25:8). Our hearts should rejoice in the reality of God’s goodness, a propensity that naturally disposes Him to instruct His children. How ignorant we would be if this God were not our God!

God’s goodness puts the stamp of approval on His preferred method of instruction – affliction. Put simply, if God is good, then affliction is good because it is His pedagogical instrument of choice. This naturally directs us to my final observation.

Eighth, Ps. 119:68 repeats the axiom that “God is good” leading fittingly to this prayer request: “Teach me Your statutes!” One should always be cautious when submitting a request to God. What does God do when He hears a prayer request uttered? Ps. 119:71 is an encouragement to be careful about the content of our prayers since God takes them seriously. After all, while at the outset we declare that we will praise God *after* He has taught us (Ps. 119:7), we may not feel like praising God *while* He teaches us!

Early in his ministry when Moses uttered his famous prayer, “Now therefore, I ask You, if I have found favor in Your sight, let me know Your ways, that I may know You, so that I may find favor in Your sight” (Ex. 33:13), did he envision the trials that he would have to endure over the next forty years to obtain an answer to his appeal?

When David cried out, “Make me know Your ways, O LORD; teach me Your paths. Lead me in Your truth and teach me” (Ps. 25:4-5), did he anticipate being a fugitive for more than a decade before he would be able to declare, “Come, you children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the LORD” (Ps. 34:11)?

When the psalmist prayed “Blessed art You, O LORD; teach me Your statutes” (Psa. 119:12); or when he requested “Open my eyes, that I may behold wonderful things from Your law” (Psa. 119:18); when he made his roughly ten requests in Psalm 119 for greater learning of God’s Law, did he grasp the extent of affliction He was welcoming into his life?

No, our appeals are naively formed on lips that expect the Great Hearer of Prayers to answer us in ways that are convenient and acceptable to us. We would like responses that conform to western 21<sup>st</sup> century standards: antiseptic, formulaic, painless, predictable, and uncomplicated. But our God is far too wise and loving to stoop to our preferences. Petty desires do not produce great results. If we want to learn the supreme truths of the universe, we must ask for great things and brace ourselves for the unorthodox but effective methods of the Greatest Teacher.

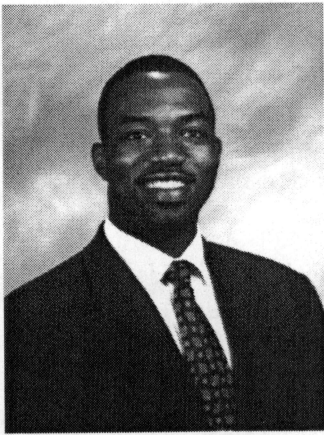
In summation, though attending classes and memorizing verses and listening to sermons are divinely ordained means by which believers grow, there is another venue where much Kingdom work transpires—the school of affliction. It is that setting that our Divine Teacher uses to parse the verbs of adversity and decline the nouns of misfortune, catechizing us with spellbinding lectures that singe the heart with God’s law. If Psalm 119:71 teaches believers anything, it is that those who wish to learn and become trained and skilled in the art of the Law of God must prepare to suffer much. Great sufferers prove themselves terrific students.

Ps. 119:71 packs a powerful punch. Edward Collamore and George Miles realized this, as did their numerous friends who together laid the foundation that produced the Washington Bible College. Their lofty dream was to get the Bible into the hearts of countless students. The anonymous author of Psalm 119 and Edward Collamore were soul mates. The nine word slogan: “The Bible in the heart, the heart of service,” buttressed by a course in “Affliction 101” should be a central pillar of the curriculum of every Washington Bible College alumnus. And Psalm 119:71 could well be the life verse of every graduate.

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# WHITHER WEALTH, POWER AND POLITICS? WHITHER A WORLDVIEW? THE MYSTERY OF BABYLON: AN EXPOSITIONAL THEOLOGY OF REVELATION 17 IN BRIEF<sup>14</sup>

*by Professor Eric C. Redmond*



ONE OF THE assignments I enjoy giving my students each year is to have them examine the mental process they use to make judgments as Christians. This past year I asked them to explain how they would approach voting for the following two Presidential candidates using only the information provided below:

Candidate "A" is a Democrat from Virginia. He is pro-life without exception. He is a Christian and a faithful member of Rich-

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<sup>14</sup>The phrase, "in brief" in the title is meant to signify that this article does not give the sort of detailed exposition that would merit the phrase "expositional theology." A full exposition would need to consider *textual issues* of a) authorship, b) audience, and c) occasion, in addition to the textual questions of d) literary design and e) meaning, (for "d" and "e," see below). This more comprehensive exposition would also consider *message issues* of a) the administration of the eternal plan of God revealed within the progress of revelation up to and containing this textual unit, b) the purposes of God within that administration, and c) the effectual goal of the text, in addition to the message issue of d) meaning (see below). However, sufficient exposition is given that the Biblical Theology and application developed in this work may be validated as the truth drawn from this passage. For more on this method of exposition and its underlying theory, see Elliott E. Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990). The reader should be aware that the phrase, "in brief" also is recognition that this document is an abridgment of a more technical, unpublished work of this author. The nature of this work as assigned required that the great bulk of interaction with scholarly commentary be withheld from this abridgment. At the time of the writing of this article, Osborne (BECNT 2003) and Beale (NIGCNT, 2003) were not available to me.

mond United Methodist Church, whose pastor is a Conservative Seminary graduate. This candidate does not believe in the full infallibility of the Scriptures. This candidate campaigned for and signed legislation to prohibit same-sex marriages and adoptions by such unions from being legalized in his state. He has received large sums of campaign financing from the Phillip Morris Companies because he backs tobacco production by farmers in his state who grow tobacco for a living. This candidate is a decorated Veteran of the Vietnam and Gulf Wars.

Candidate "B" is a Republican from Wisconsin. He is pro-life, but with allowances for first-trimester abortions in the cases of rape, incest and poverty. He is a Christian, and a member of Bible Fellowship Church, whose pastor is a conservative Bible college and seminary graduate. He has no position on the infallibility of the Scriptures, and he has recently appointed two judges to the bench in his state who treat child pornography peddling as offenses punishable as capital crimes. He receives large sums of campaign financing from environmentalists and animal-rights groups who protest the slaughtering of pigs as anti-environmental and inhumane. This candidate was a draft-dodger during the Vietnam War.

Questions like this address our manner of rationalization in decision-making. All questions about *existence, knowing, morality, human nature, and human significance* ask us to consider our personal *worldview*. Our *worldview* is our mental roadmap that we, as individuals, institutions, or classes of people, use to think about life – what is real, what is important, and what is ultimate – to direct us through decision-making in this world.<sup>15</sup> A worldview is sometimes referred to as a "matrix"<sup>16</sup> or filter for shaping our thought processes.

Everyone has a worldview, and everyone's worldview leads him or her to make choices that will bring the most pleasure out of life. For the unbeliever, the pursuit of pleasure will be directed by the things of the earthly life (cf., Jn. 3:19-20; Rom. 1:21-23; 8:5-8; 1 Cor. 1:18-25; 2:6-8, 14; Phil. 3:19). But for the believer, who is being renewed in his or her mind, the worldview should be guided by God, the

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<sup>15</sup> This definition is adapted from Brian J. Walsh and J. Richard Middleton, *The Transforming Vision: Shaping a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1984).

<sup>16</sup> See Richard Lints, "The Nature and Purpose of a Theological Vision," in *The Fabric of Theology: A Prolegomenon in Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1993): 12-14

Word of God, and the things of God (Jn. 3:21; Rom. 8:9-25; 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 2:15; Phil. 3:20; Col. 3:1-4).

In Revelation 17, the dominating worldview of the people of the earth is presented in terms of the relationship between Babylon, the Beast (Antichrist), the rulers and people of this world. The challenge for us is to see how this worldview is prevalent in our own lives, and to then ask God to adjust our worldview so that it is aligned with His.

As one begins to analyze Revelation 17 in order to discern a correlation to "worldview," it would be wise to note that this is not a simple task. This is because many students of Revelation have been predisposed to a view that the Babylon of Revelation 17 is the apostate church,<sup>17</sup> an ecclesiastical entity,<sup>18</sup> or an economic entity.<sup>19</sup> The position of Babylon as related to a worldview is different.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, to attempt to make this analysis as palatable as possible, the following approach will be taken to this study. Firstly, this study will present the *meaning* of Revelation 17 and explain the images in the chapter, so as to reveal the identity of "Babylon." Secondly, this study will state the *application* of the meaning of this passage of Scripture and the reasoning for such.

## THE MEANING OF REVELATION 17

### EXPLANATION OF "MEANING"

When one speaks of the meaning of a passage or book in Scripture, one is considering what the author of the text intended to communicate to his original audience in terms that would be understood by that audience.<sup>21</sup> In examining Revelation 17, one should seek to discern what the Apostle John<sup>22</sup> intended to communicate to the first century believers in the churches of Asia Minor<sup>23</sup> as he

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<sup>17</sup> John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Chicago: Moody, 1966): 243-267.

<sup>18</sup> J. Dwight Pentecost, *Things to Come* (Findlay, OH: Dunham, 1958): 368.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas R. Edgar, "Babylon: Ecclesiastical, Political, or What?" JETS 25/3 (Sept. 1982): 340-341.

<sup>20</sup> Such a view will not dismiss Babylon's identity as a city. Neither will such a view give the antithetical "[acknowledgement] that the divine identification of the harlot is a city, *not* a mystical system," (Charles H. Dyer, "The Identity of Babylon in Revelation 17-18," BSac 144/575 [Jul.-Sept. 1987]: 312), italics Redmond.

<sup>21</sup> See Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*.

<sup>22</sup> It is beyond the scope of this work to examine the breadth of arguments surrounding the authorship of Revelation. The position taken by this writer is that the Apostle John, disciple of Jesus, bishop of the churches of Asia Minor, who was exiled to Patmos by Emperor Domitian, is the author of the work which bears the name "John," (cf., Rev. 1:4, 9; 22:8). For more on the authorship of Revelation, see Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1-7: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody, 1992): 2-19.

<sup>23</sup> Reference is to the seven churches of Revelation 2-3, and to other churches that John's work would have circulated in the first century.

gave the *oral composition* of his vision of the events and activities associated with Babylon.<sup>24</sup> This involves consideration of the terms of the text within the apocalyptic genre.<sup>25</sup>

The meaning discerned by the terms of the passage can be stated in one complete sentence consisting of a *subject* and *complement*. The subject is *the most talked about idea in a textual unit, which ties all of the other ideas of that unit together*; it is *what the author is talking about*. The complement is *the criticism, commentary or judgment made on the subject*; it is *what the author is saying about the subject*, or *what the author is saying about what he is talking about*. Therefore, the meaning of Revelation 17 may be stated as follows:

The revelation of Babylon the Mystery and her punishment<sup>26</sup>  
calls<sup>27</sup> for the saints to have a mind of wisdom  
rather than to be astonished by her.<sup>28</sup>

### DERIVATION OF THE MEANING

Stating what one has concluded about the meaning of these verses, without a prior explanation of how such meaning was derived, warrants justification. It is especially necessary when one considers that this meaning is the only basis by which exegesis of individual terms of this passage, and the gaining of the theology of this passage, may be completed in truth. Therefore, key terms of the meaning statement need to be explained.

1. *Revelation...mystery*. In question in this passage is both what John was *shown* by the angel,<sup>29</sup> and the truth behind what he was shown. It is evident that

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<sup>24</sup> John is instructed to write down what he sees, (1:1; 19).

<sup>25</sup> For more on the definition, components, and hermeneutics of apocalyptic genre, see Elliott E. Johnson, "Apocalyptic Genre in Literal Interpretation" in *Essays in Honor of J. Dwight Pentecost* (Chicago: Moody, 1986): 197-210.

<sup>26</sup> This entire first line is the *subject*. This is what John is talking about in Revelation 17.

<sup>27</sup> "Calls," the first verb in this sentence structure, begins the complement. Mounce would refer to this as the "predicate," (William D. Mounce, *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar* [Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1993]: 26, 32 n. 4.

<sup>28</sup> This entire statement is consistent with the type-traits within the meaning of Revelation *as a whole* as discerned by this author: "The revelation of Jesus as the Sovereign Lord of history past, present, and future, provides wisdom for the saints to gain the testimony of an overcomer." The provision of wisdom in 17:1-18 is consistent with what the author is saying about the subject of the book of Revelation. The revelation of the mystery and judgment of 17:1-18 are a trait of Jesus' lordship (i.e., as the conquering Lamb, when Babylon is revealed, He will rule over her in her destruction). For more on the type-trait model of exegesis and interpretation, see E. D. Hirsch, *Validity in Interpretation* (Yale, 1967), and Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*.

<sup>29</sup> The word "show" (Grk. *deixo*), means "to expose to the eyes." All Scripture quotations are taken from the NET Bible.



John had a visual experience that caused him great astonishment because he had never seen this sight before.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, this is the first time Babylon is made known, or revealed, to John in this way. That this is revelation to John is also evidenced by the fact that John is in need of an interpretation of something on which there is no previous revelation.<sup>31</sup> In addition, 17:1-18 is structured around a framework of seeking to identify a mystery (1-6a) and the explanation of that mystery:

Angel's beckon- ing to John to see Babylon	John's vision of the Mystery – Babylon	Explanation of the Mystery and the Beast	Explanation of the Mystery and the Waters
1-2	3-6a	6b-14	15-18
Revelation about Babylon, <b>but a mystery</b>		Revelation about Babylon <b>with an explanation</b>	
5 Identity of a Mystery		9 The Call for Wisdom	

- The entire passage is given to an unveiling of Babylon.
- Her punishment.* While several verses in this passage describe the ghastly beast, and the elaborate clothing and accessories, cup, name, and associates of the woman (17:3-12), the passage intends to give revelation about the “condemnation and punishment” of Babylon.<sup>32</sup> In the same vein, the climax of the passage depicts the actions of kings (and their kingdoms) and the beast intended to “make [Babylon] desolate and naked.” The alliance that turns on Babylon “will consume her flesh and burn her up with fire.” While these terms await exegesis of their full implications,<sup>33</sup> at minimum they imply that there will be an *end* to Babylon. Also, the events associated with Babylon include destruction of the kings and the beast (17:10, 11, 14) at the hands of the Messiah and his willing troops upon His time of conquest (17:14).
  - Calls for the saints to have a mind of wisdom rather than to be astonished.* The vivid portrait of Babylon, her judgment and the explanation thereof, are un-

<sup>30</sup> The term “saw” in the passage occurs eight times (17:3, 6 (2x), 8, 12, 15, 16, 18).

<sup>31</sup> This would be consistent with the definition of “mystery” (Grk. “*mysterion*”) in the New Testament when used to give truth (cf., Matt. 13:11; Rom. 11:25; 1 Cor. 15:51; Eph. 3:4-9; 5:32; Col. 1:26-27; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 1:20), Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 8-22* (Chicago: Moody, 1995): 292.

<sup>32</sup> See 17:1 in the NET Bible. The editors argue for the translation of the Greek term *krino* to be expressed in two terms in order to bring out the full implications of this term, rather than in the one term “judgment,” as in the KJV, or “punishment,” as in the NIV.

<sup>33</sup> See Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*, 137-145.

veiled for more than simple information sharing. The recipients were to *apply* wisdom based on what is revealed.<sup>34</sup> This wisdom is not necessary because the “clarification” of the vision in verses 9-11 “anticipates the difficulty and complexity of the vision of v. 8.”<sup>35</sup> Instead, it is necessary because there were people of the earth deceived by the marvel of Babylon (vv. 2, 8). This astonishment, that would make a person desire Babylon,<sup>36</sup> was rebuked by the angelic messenger when evidenced in John.<sup>37</sup> Apparently John, a saint with the testimony of Jesus (v. 6), was not supposed to marvel at Babylon. Yet he was in need of the stern words and the interpretation of the angel to cease his marveling.

Just as it was incorrect for John to marvel, it would be to the destruction of anyone to marvel. However, it is apparent that only the “called, chosen, and faithful”—the believers—will be those who do not participate with Babylon. When Christ makes His glorious return, it is believers who are distinguished from those who do participate with Babylon.<sup>38</sup> Hence, through the unveiling—the revelation and explanation—of Babylon and its mystery, wisdom is given to the reader to help make decisions with eternal ramifications.

## THE IDENTITY OF BABYLON

Verse 3 identifies Babylon as a “woman,” and verse 18 identifies Babylon as a “city.” But several other clues in the chapter let the reader know that John is trying to describe in code something more than a prostitute, or simply a city:

1. *Babylon is described as the one with whom the kings and the people of the earth “have committed sexual immorality,” (v. 2).* No one woman could be responsible for this many acts of evil even if she was the property of one king of one kingdom and was made available to visiting potentates. This description, and

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<sup>34</sup> Verse 9 literally says, “here is the mind that has wisdom.” But the concept of wisdom within Scripture includes use of a truth gained to make right(eous) decisions.

<sup>35</sup> While this is the view of Thomas, (*Revelation* 8-22, 295), one must consider that the beginning of the “clarification” or interpretation of the vision *precedes* the need for wisdom (17:8). The need, therefore, cannot *anticipate* the “difficulty and complexity” of the vision.

<sup>36</sup> The desire, while not obviously expressed in the concept of “astonished,” is indeed inherent within the use of the term in this context, because such astonishment is what has led to the drunkenness of the kings and peoples of the earth. Prostitutes adorned themselves in the splendid fashion of verse 4 in order to make themselves attractive to men.

<sup>37</sup> The nature of rhetorical questions, such as the one in verse 7, is to correct inappropriate behavior.

<sup>38</sup> This statement is in reference to the saints who are martyred (17:6) during this period of tribulation. It provokes the reader to give self-examination as to whether he or she shows evidence of being *elect of and faithful to Jesus*. This is true for readers of all generations.

several others which follow, make use of “high development of a figurative sense.”<sup>39</sup> Also, it must be kept in mind that fornication and adultery are terms used in some contexts to speak about *idolatry*, otherwise known as *spiritual adultery*, or infidelity against God.

2. *Babylon sits on a red, blasphemous-named, seven-headed, ten-horned beast* (v. 3). Two things indicate that Babylon must not be a woman or simply a city:
  - a. No person could sit on such a beast, if such a beast ever existed.
  - b. The beast has previously been revealed to be a human figure (13:18; 16:10).
3. *Babylon has a “cup” full of abominations and the filth of her acts of sexual immorality*, (v. 4). While the cup is “gold,” and very expensive, it is desecrated by its contents: sin and idolatry. Like the other images, the content of the cup exceeds that which can be contained by any cup that could be held by one person. The content of the cup is not liquid or another material substance, but it is of human actions. Thus, the cup and its contents are hyperbolic.
4. *She has a name on her forehead*, (v. 5). Prostitutes in the Roman world wore a brand on their foreheads with their names on it so that they could be identified by the legal authorities.<sup>40</sup> But this name is too big to fit on any person’s forehead. Also “mystery,” is not part of the name.<sup>41</sup>
5. *She herself is drunk with the blood of the saints*, (v. 6). “Drunk with” is another way to describe someone “full of,” or “having had much of” something. Babylon has “had much of” the blood of the saints, so much so that she has become intoxicated by it. Is Babylon therefore a cannibal? No. She is responsible for the death, the shedding of the blood, of *many* of God’s people.
6. *Babylon is supported by, “rides on,” the Beast’s heads and horns, which are identified as kings and their kingdoms (mountains), and kings whose reign is future to the reign of the seven kings*, (vv. 7, 10, 12). As the head and horns are symbolic, so is the woman who rides on them.
7. *Babylon sits on, “rules,” many “waters.”* These waters are identified as the people of the earth, (vv. 1, 15).
8. Babylon is also described as a “mystery.” In the New Testament, a “mystery” is a theological truth that has largely remained hidden or previously undisclosed until the point in time of its description or revelation. Until the time of this vision to John, the theological truth concerning “Babylon” had not been revealed by God to His people. The unveiling of this mystery also manifests these truths about Babylon:

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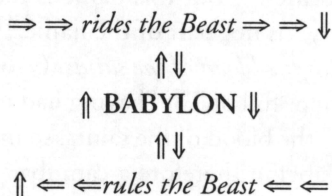
<sup>39</sup> Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*, 195.

<sup>40</sup> Thomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 288.

<sup>41</sup> Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, 246; Thomas, *Revelation 8-22*, 289.

- a. Babylon is described as being dressed royally and richly in clothing that would be very alluring to any man. But it is not simply men who are attracted, but the inhabitants of the earth.
  - b. By *sitting* on the Beast, Babylon gives evidence of being supported by the Beast, a human figure who will rule a kingdom, and by the kings of the earth (v.13). But the chapter also shows that Babylon “has sovereignty over” the Beast and the kings (v. 18). The terms of Babylon’s relationship to the Beast and the kings describe *political* relationships.
9. *Babylon is described the “Mother of prostitutes and of the detestable things of the earth,” (v. 5). As the “mother,” she is the one from whom “(spiritual) prostitution” and “abominations” originate.*<sup>42</sup>

In summary, Babylon is an entity that is revealed to be blasphemous (v. 3), attractive and rich (to mankind, v. 4), an abomination and filthy (in the sight of God, v. 4), the progenitor of idolatry and abominations, responsible for the killing of many of God’s saints and prophets, who both draws power from and gives power to the Antichrist, (see Fig. 1).



*“Babylon” and the Antichrist feed one another.*

Fig. 1

In addition to the above truths, Babylon is identified finally as “the great city,” (v. 18). It is significant that this statement comes within the interpretation section

<sup>42</sup> Thomas uses the term “progenitress” (*Revelation* 8-22, 290).

<sup>43</sup> The use of “historical” here is not meant to indicate that Babylon was a reality limited to the First Century AD or a previous period of history. The term is only meant to indicate that Babylon, as a city, is not a mythical or figurative reality. It is an actual, political entity that was known to the readers of John’s revelation, seemingly geographically associated with the Euphrates river (cf. 16:12, 19), and an entity that will come to power during the eschaton. “Historical” is preferred over the term “literal.”

of this unit (17:8-18). “Great city” cannot be reduced to a figurative description. It is a historical reality.<sup>43</sup>

Thus, Babylon is *the rebuilt and revived historical city of Babylon*,<sup>44</sup> *that will govern the rulers and political entities of the world during the eschaton, and will be kept in “rule” by the peoples of the earth as their decision-making, their worldview, is guided by the pursuit of wealth (the woman’s gold cup, apparel and accessories) and power.*<sup>45</sup>

The “mystery” about Babylon that is now revealed is this: *All political alliances, all governing decisions by the rulers of this world, and all decisions made by the people of this world are in some way guided by the intoxicating effect of having or desiring to have wealth and power.*<sup>46</sup> Also, *because wealth and power are so alluring, people do not even know that they are drunk with this worldview and have been in an adulterous relationship with it all their lives.*

“Babylon” is what rules the future world system. Babylon is the reason the future kings of the tribulation period and the Antichrist will come to power, and it is the reason they will attempt to make war with the Lord (v. 14). Ultimately, this will lead the kings of the earth to fight among themselves and be destroyed by the wrath of God (v. 14).

## THE APPLICATION OF THE MEANING OF REVELATION 17

In order to make proper application of the meaning of Revelation 17, several considerations must be made:

1. All Scripture is to be obeyed by believers (Ja. 1:21-25; cf. 1 Tim. 3:16-17). Therefore, Revelation 17 must be obeyed by believers in the contemporary Church. While there are no commands to be followed in this passage, as a portion of literature framed in the genre of wisdom (v. 9), the truth to be followed must be discerned from the righteousness and blessing of some people (which

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<sup>44</sup> The designations “rebuilt” and “revived” do not to suggest that figures or forms of government from the past city of Babylon will reappear. Also, the view that Babylon is a symbol for Rome seems to be excluded by the terms in the text. While the seven “mountains” could be translated as “hills,” indicating Rome, they are revealed in the textual interpretation to be figurative for kings and their respective kingdoms (vv. 9-11). The city of Rome may sit on seven hills, but topography is not in view in the passage. Succession of kings of one empire is also excluded because in view are kings from many nations “of the earth” (v. 2).

<sup>45</sup> The kings receive “authority” (Grk. *exousin*) with the Beast, and give “power” (Grk. *dunamin*) to the Beast. They give their power out of a desire to be with the prostitute. Their decision-making process does not have the wisdom to direct them otherwise.

<sup>46</sup> This statement initially may seem extreme. However, the terms of the text are clear on the fact that it is the “earth’s inhabitants,” not simply the kings, who have been intoxicated by the works of the prostitute. In addition, the warning of wisdom is not to the kings, but to John and the “saints”—a term not limited by boundaries of cultures or dispensations.

is to be followed and desired), or from the folly, error and destruction of other people (which is to be avoided and not desired).

2. Application must be drawn from the meaning itself, for the meaning is the statement drawn from what the textual unit's terms are intended to represent and communicate. The application of meaning must be shown to be relevant to contemporary Christians, their society and age in history, if in fact believers of every age are able to carry out God's demand to be obedient to this and all passages of Scripture.<sup>47</sup> This is true of an apocalyptic passage like Revelation 17, though its nature as futuristic means that what has been shown has not yet happened.
3. In addition to the aspect of relevance (#2 above), specific actions must be carried out by believers. By the grace of God, and the power of the Holy Spirit of God, believers' thoughts, motives, affections, emotions, words and deeds must all conform to the Scriptural standards given by their holy God and Savior (cf. 1 Cor. 10:31; Col. 3:17; 1 Pet. 1:16).

Therefore, the following statement of application is intended to apply the meaning of Revelation 17:

The truth about the end of the present world system (of wealth and power) calls for the saints to be wise about what rules and guides their lives.

Or it could be better stated in this manner:

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<sup>47</sup> Johnson, *Expository Hermeneutics*, 213-223.

<sup>48</sup> In the progress of revelation, "revelation"—specific revelation—is "truth" of the word of God. Believers will not again receive canonical "revelation" on Babylon, for that is complete. However, there will be *illumination* on the canonical revelation with more study of the passage, and with recognition of fulfillment of this revelation when the Antichrist is revealed and rules with allied powers contemporary to the rebuilding of Babylon.

<sup>49</sup> The end for Babylon will be the end for this present world, for the return of Christ and the wedding supper of the Lamb follow (Rev. 19).

<sup>50</sup> To demonstrate that this statement of application would be relevant to believers of all ages, one should understand that First Century believers would have been encouraged and warned about trying to safeguard their lives by siding with the Roman Empire and its rulers, and believers in the eschaton will need to be wary of seeking the economic pleasures afforded by allegiance to the Antichrist, and submission to his allied powers. Poythress, though holding to a view of Babylon other than the one espoused here, writes, "Babylon is attractive because she promises the pleasures of sensuality and prosperity. Both the clothing of Babylon in 17:4 and the laments in 18:9-20 indicate that much of the attraction of Babylon lies in her wealth and luxury. The pagans in Asia looked to Rome as the source and guarantee of economic well-being and material comfort. They gave political allegiance and worship to the Roman emperor, *not only because they feared the power of Rome, but because they*



The truth<sup>48</sup> about the end of the present world system<sup>49</sup> calls for the saints to maintain a Christian worldview toward wealth and power.<sup>50</sup>

From this statement, the following applications are offered:<sup>51</sup>

1. *Believers should not be motivated by a desire to acquire great wealth, or the things it can buy.* This includes more wealth, luxurious houses, fancy cars, housing in classier neighborhoods, higher-end clothing, and expensive or exotic vacations, only to name a few. These are all things for which the world lives. These show a heart and love for this present world rather than the eternal things of God. The world's system is alluring because it is what natural man wants more than anything else, more money and more power, and natural man will sell his soul to be drunk with this wine. Believers need to be mindful that all of these things will all be completely destroyed in the end.
2. *Believers must hold loosely the things of this present world, and tightly the things of the next world (eternity).* Believers should avoid the earthly tendencies to work only to obtain a paycheck so as to accumulate or amass material things, and to invest principally to gain a higher social status, whether perceived or actual. Believers should stop working only to get cars, clothes, sound equipment, more CD's and video games and DVDs, alcohol for happiness, furniture, computer software, trips to eat out, vacations, toys, video rentals, and hair and bodily makeovers! A Christian worldview recognizes that the believer must work to please God, and then enjoy the rest in God that the days of work and the fruit of one's labor provide (cf. 1 Tim. 6:17, 19). It is also worth noting that when the "Babylon" worldview comes into the Church, those who have the most money and positions of power are then "courted" by leadership to have the "ruling" positions in church, while the "have-nots" are looked upon as insignificant.
3. *Political leaders often seek power and wealth in the running of their municipalities without consideration of God and His people.* One should not think a political candidate is completely on the Church's side. Politics is about wealth and power, about deals being made that will keep a candidate in power so that others may not be in power. If the Church depends too heavily upon political powers and processes to act as a primary agents of righteousness in this present

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loved the economic benefits they received from her (Vern S. Poythress, *The Return of the King: A Guide to the Book of Revelation* [Phillipsburg: P&R, 2000]: 160-161), italics Redmond. For many believers in the first century and in the eschaton, in order to live the life of an overcomer, martyrdom, rather than the acquiring of wealth and power (and their corresponding safety and comfort) will be the path of choice.

<sup>51</sup> The specific applications of the meaning of this passage are not limited to the ones being offered

age, rather than depending upon God and His grace to accomplish the work of God, the Church may be allured into depending upon the potential significance the influence and money of the voters within their congregation may have upon local, national or international politics. The courting of politicians to obtain the justice and freedom the Church seeks in this world must be done with a view to God's absolute sovereign rule.

A proper biblical worldview of government exhorts Believers to pray for world, national and local leaders (2 Tim. 2:1-5), submit to the government and its laws (Rom. 13:1-5; 1 Pet. 2:13-25), pay taxes as prescribed (Rom. 13:8-9), live peaceably (2 Tim 2:1-2), and live godly lives consistently, passing it on to the next generation (Titus 2:1-15). This is what the godly do rather than picket, lobby, or depend on a presidential succession to bring about righteousness. However, these statements recognize certain freedoms Christians in democracies have to utilize political processes for the good of a nation.

## CONCLUSION

Having considered the meaning and application of Revelation 17, it is now appropriate to reconsider the two hypothetical presidential candidates. Concerning Candidate A, certain terms on his fact sheet are foils, intended to determine if the student will utilize his or her worldview to see through neutral matters. His political party is not the issue, for he can please God wearing either label. However, the fact that he is pro-life is very important since he is claiming to be a believer (cf. Ex. 20:13 with Ps. 139: 13-16), and he may pick judges and justices who will influence laws concerning the life and rights of the unborn. His pastor's schooling and church's denomination are not significant, for the candidate may be more or less sound in his walk than the pastor, depending upon many factors.<sup>52</sup>

His denial of the infallibility of the Scriptures may lead him to equivocate on righteousness where it is more advantageous to his political process. His stance on the family and homosexuality aligns with Scripture. His reception of money from the tobacco industry may lead him to be soft on legislation addressing cigarette advertising to minors and suits against tobacco companies. His military decorations are honorable, and may indicate dedication and service to his country. However, his life in politics may have changed this soldier into a pure politician, or he may give more to military spending and less to appropriate social programs designed to offer compassion to the poor.

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<sup>52</sup> If either candidate's religious system were of a radical or extremist group, especially of one that hates or intends to harm another ethnic, religious or gender-specified group, that would be significant. This statement assumes the believer's desire to do good, regardless of denomination.

Concerning Candidate B, party affiliation, church membership, and pastor's schooling, again, are not the real issues. His pro-life stance considers allowances that affect only a small percentage of pregnancies in this nation. However, Candidate B still allows for life to be taken. His stance on the Scriptures is as ambiguous as that of the other candidate. While he has a strong stance for the protection of children and families, one would be concerned about whether Candidate B would allow pig-farmers and plant workers to lose their jobs and livelihoods because of the role the environmentalists and animal-rights groups play toward his war chest. While dodging the draft may not seem biblical,<sup>53</sup> the candidate may be more mature now than he was at the time of the draft.

In the end, one must have a personal conviction that God rules over all rulers. No political power can have absolute dominion over the life of a believer. Nor can political succession become the hope of the wise. Candidate A or B can be used by God to fulfill his plan for the ages. The believer, at least in this case, would have a choice between two imperfect candidates in need of the grace of God to serve Him faithfully. The Christian worldview recognizes that strong hope in either of the candidates' ability to bring about earthly righteousness may signal or lead to an "adulterous" relationship with politicians for the sake of keeping wealth and power in our hands, or in the hands of our favorite candidate or party.

Wither a lust for wealth, power, and politics? In the end, both the city of Babylon and the corresponding worldview will be destroyed, and Christ, the conquering king, will be all in all. Let us therefore maintain a Christian worldview toward the wealth-power-political world system. Let us leave Babylon to mother her own children, to ride her Beast, and to lie with her kings and her people.

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At the time of the writing of this article (May 2002), Eric C. Redmond was Assistant Professor of Bible and Theology at Washington Bible College (1997-2003), and Adjunct Teacher at Capital Bible Seminary. He currently serves as Pastor of Hillcrest Baptist Church, Temple Hills, MD.

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<sup>53</sup> The issue of draft-dodging is not simple. For example, if one were a Christian born in Egypt, and was conscripted by Egypt to fight against Israel, would the Bible constrain him to go? The answer to that question, from a Christian worldview, is very complex. At minimum, more factors about the war would need to be known.

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## PART THREE: TESTIMONIES OF WBC/CBS ALUMNI

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### UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION...

*Winfield Dickenson Buzby (CBS '71)*

Chaplain (Colonel), U.S. Army  
Bridgetown, New Jersey

I WAS RAISED in a Christian home by godly parents, and under the influence of a devout and dedicated Christian grandmother who was for more than two decades our family's matriarch. We attended church whenever the doors were open and had family devotions every night in our home. Yet somehow I never made a personal commitment to Christ myself. I was on a plateau that was rapidly turning into a slippery slope. College caused me to realize that my life was lacking in content as well as purpose. But thankfully, where my strength ended God's power and provision began.



In the fall of 1965 I returned to a small liberal arts college to begin my junior year, after being out of school for a year due to health problems. On September 25<sup>th</sup>, the first Saturday night back in school, I met Patricia Ann Peregoy. She would soon become the love of my life, and later my beloved wife.

I knew she was different and asked her why. She said she had just become a Christian herself in May, and invited me to go to church with her the next morning. I did, and that evening we returned. When Pastor Ernest Baker gave the invitation to come forward and accept Christ as Savior, I went up smiling broadly, knowing that my struggle was over. I accepted Christ as my Savior, and publicly stated my desire to live for Him.

Within a month, thanks to Pastor Baker's connections, I had "met" WBC and CBS in conjunction with a Jack Wyrzten rally at Constitution Hall. On October 31<sup>st</sup> I was baptized. Within a month, thanks to a letter from an aunt who had served as one of my youth leaders, I began to give serious consideration to full-time Christian service. And within another month, I had committed to becoming an Army chaplain. Think of it: salvation, a wife to be, and a calling—all within 90 days!

Shortly after (to the chagrin of friends, college professors, and even some well-meaning family members) I knew Capital Bible Seminary was where I wanted to take my training. While some argued that it was small, relatively young, and uncredentialed, I knew it was a godly institution where I would receive a quality education, be shaped of the Lord, and receive a rich spiritual heritage that would sustain my life and ministry for years to come.

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 1967 Pat and I graduated from college: I as a Distinguished Military Graduate (deferred from active duty), and she as a certified teacher. On July 1<sup>st</sup> we were married, and in September my uncle loaned me \$75 (I'm embarrassed to tell you that was the cost of tuition then) so I could begin classes.

Those days were arduous. Having been a math major in a liberal arts college, I could recount the names of the gospels, but really didn't know too much about them. Taking first year Greek and Hebrew together was good for my prayer life, as were several advanced courses such as "Advanced Bibliology" (When I literally didn't even know what the word after Advanced meant). But God was faithful.

In May of 1971 I graduated from Capital, was ordained at Adelphi Bible Church, completed the U.S. Army Chaplain Basic Officer Course at the Army Chaplain School, and branch transferred into the Chaplaincy from the Infantry Corps (in which I had originally been commissioned). I was ready to enter the Army, but God had other plans. For a year I did substitute teaching during the week and pulpit supply on weekends. Both proved to be invaluable experiences and very educational.

My wife reduced her teaching load to one class, and arranged her schedule so she could be a full-time student at Washington Bible College, taking every Bible course she could possibly squeeze in. That training would be vital in Pat's ministry in later years in our home, in the local church, and in the Army chaplaincy.

In the summer of 1972 I was called to Pastor an independent Bible Church in Baltimore County, having served earlier as a part-time assistant pastor at Adelphi

while in seminary. In the full-time pastorate God took the academic and spiritual lessons I had learned in seminary and refined them in the crucible of pastoral care, preaching, and church leadership. As my pulpit ministry blossomed, it was clear that God had used Capital to provide training and development of my gifts in preparation for future service.

In March of 1975, 10 years after my call to that ministry, I received orders to report on active duty to Fort Hood, Texas as an Army Chaplain. I went ahead by myself. My pregnant wife supervised our household's packing and movement, and then joined me a month later with our 2-year old daughter.

In my first year as a missionary to the military (when I was keeping meticulous records to annotate what God was doing) I had the privilege of seeing over 100 persons accept Christ as their Savior. I soon realized that there was great freedom in Army pulpits, and that parishioners tended to be hungry for messages that were Bible-based, Christ-centered, and which spoke in practical ways to everyday life.

Over the years as I rose through the ranks I moved from being the primary pastor of the congregation to being a "pastor" of pastors. In Germany I had the opportunity to administer a chapel outreach program over an area the size of New Jersey, while providing training and resources to over 60 chaplains. I realized that as I shaped and guided the ministries of other chaplains I had the opportunity to leverage my own.

Even as I had opportunities to serve, the Army provided several opportunities to further my education. On the military side, I finished the Officer Advanced Course, Command and General Staff College, and the highest level school of all—the U.S. Army War College.

Along the way, the Army sent me for a Masters Degree in church administration at Princeton Seminary and allowed me the opportunity to get a Doctor of Ministry from Drew University. In addition, the Army provided for me to take two semesters of basic and advanced Clinical Pastoral Education.

There was one common theme that tied all of these educational experiences together. I was keenly aware that Capital had provided me with a spiritual foundation and an academic preparation that readied me for all future academic and life endeavors. And I soon came to understand that in terms of academic excellence, none of those institutions surpassed Capital.

Now, in my last assignment before my mandatory retirement after 30 years of active federal service, I serve on the faculty of the U.S. Army War College. I teach core courses in how the army runs (such as leadership, force structure, budgeting, etc.), teach electives in World Religions, manage the Military Family Program, and serve as project advisor for 2-3 student research projects annually.

I will draw this to a close with a few key observations. The first is that I received a first-class education at Capital.



Secondly, I am very much aware that it was highly subsidized by others: donors and faculty and staff alike. Over the years my wife and I have tried to pass that blessing on to others. We don't believe in "giving" to WBS/CBS. But we do believe in investing there, realizing that every "gift" has the potential to bear rich dividends in the lives of students, and in the lives of all the people their ministries will touch. As I often say, "Where else can your investment make such a 'prophet'?"

And lastly, the older I get the more I pay attention to names, such as Capital Bible Seminary. I like that. Its middle name is Bible, and that book is indeed central to everything that happens there. As President Miles used to so wisely admonish, "Make sure your understanding and view of the Bible are correct, and everything else will fall in place." Thankfully that vision and purpose continue and prosper under President Heater's leadership.

Yes, WBC and CBS have deeply touched my life, and those of my entire family. I think of the year Pat studied at WBC and the tools she learned to study and teach God's Word. And then in 1979 I had the joy of seeing my parents give five years of dedicated service to the College and Seminary. While they brought standards of excellence and disciplined work to the Maintenance and Public Affairs offices, I am happy to say that they consider that time to be the best years of their lives. They would be the first to admit that they received back far more than they gave.

Our married daughters have indirectly benefited from WBC and CBS as well. Our oldest is a veterinarian who has started a Christian business, and who has served as a summer missionary to South America. Our younger daughter, a University of Virginia law school graduate, has served as a missionary to Hungary for two years, and with her new husband plans to serve as a short term missionary to India this summer.

I know our own lives have been changed, even to the third and fourth generation. I'm very thankful for the love and support of my family, and for the "family" that Capital Bible Seminary is, and has been to me over the years.

I am thankful that God saw fit to call me to be an Army Chaplain, and that He chose to use Capital Bible Seminary to equip and enable me to serve in a way that changed people's lives, for eternity.

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# SOLID TRAINING GROUND WITH FAR REACHING IMPACT

*Isabel Lee (WBC '80)*  
Serving with SEND Int'l  
Hong Kong

I WAS RAISED in a Christian home. The Lord blessed me with parents who taught me the Word of God and modeled for me their trust in God. I accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior at a young age. Sometime during my sophomore year in high school I surrendered my life to God and desired to let Him be the Lord of my life.

When I considered college, I felt that since I desired to know God more, I ought to consider spending more time learning the Word of God. With high recommendation I didn't have to look far, and I began at Washington Bible College in 1976. I appreciate those precious solid training years I had: The seven-o'clock morning classes with Mr. James Schuppe on Bible survey; Theology Classes with Dr. Sam Fowler; Old Testament classes with Mr. William Bishop; New Testament classes with Dr. David Johnson; missions classes with Mr. Glen Welsford and others. Though all these classes required hard work, which I probably did not greatly appreciate then, I am thankful for those wonderful years, which laid a solid biblical foundation in my life and my ministry.

Our class verse from 2 Timothy 2:15: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (NKJV) and class song: "May the Mind of Christ My Savior" have become some of my favorites. My years at WBC taught me to always be diligent in the studying of God's Word, to be true to His Word and be ready to teach and share the Word of God.

One of the many precious memories from WBC was the life example from my professors. Their commitment to God, to His Word, to their responsibilities and to students God entrusted to them taught me always to put God first and be faithful wherever God would place me. Each of them took special interest in

students, both in and outside of classrooms. They patiently explained, listened and helped us grow in the knowledge, understanding, and the application of the Word. They spent time with students on ball fields, in concerts, in meetings, and at meal times. I learned from them that people are priority in ministry, not a program or project.

My professors encouraged creativity, teamwork, and diligence. I remember we spent many hours working on the New Testament charts that Dr. Johnson required. How much fun we had spreading out our papers on the dorm floor helping one another to come up with different codes! We cheered one another on to complete the assignments. Specializing in missions, I spent many hours at Mr. Welsford's office seeking advice and discussing projects. One incident that stands out clearly in my memories was asking Mr. Welsford why he didn't give A's to our work. His reply was "no one's work is perfect." I told him that I agreed with him, but I feel that I deserve A's if I put in my best effort.

I feel that WBC not only taught me how to do "things," but most importantly, the Lord used those years and His faithful servants to help me develop godly character. I realize that this is a lifelong process from which I still have much to learn each day, as I desire to be conformed to my Lord Jesus.

The daily chapel and the missions conference were two ways God used to work in my life little by little. I am also thankful for the Christian service requirement we had each week. From each assignment I learned and developed many ministry skills as I had opportunities to participate in different ministries and serve in my home church. WBC gave me opportunities to put into practice what I learned in classrooms. WBC views as highly important the partnership between the school and the student's home church.

The summer after my sophomore year in 1978, I went to Taiwan as a summer worker with SEND International (formerly Far Eastern Gospel Crusade). Mr. Welsford guided me every step of the way in my preparation, and God used that summer to show me His love for "the world," expand my horizon, give me a deeper burden for the lost, and direct me back to Taiwan as a career church planting missionary after graduation.

One requirement during that summer missions internship class was to keep a journal of God's work in my life and my ministry, and I find it so very helpful not just for those summer months but to this day as I journal my experiences of God's faithfulness. Those entries always encourage me in my moments of discouragement when I need to be reminded of God's unfailing love, unfolding grace, and His unchanging promises.

My graduating class in 1980 was one of the biggest classes and had the highest percentage of graduates going overseas as missionaries. I praise God for His wonderful work which He began in us and His faithfulness that still keep us serving Him faithfully.

I lived on campus three-and-a-half years out of my four years, and it was great. I learned not to just get along with my roommates but to enjoy them, though we were very different in personality and background. We became good friends and have kept some contact over the last twenty years. Campus life was fun. We had floor meetings and enjoyed special speakers. Students sat in the hallways and studied for exams after lights out. We shared goodies from home with one another and had white-glove inspections occasionally. I was especially impressed and enjoyed the first year I lived on campus that we had dinner family style: students dressed up for dinner and each table had a host and hostess. We learned a lot about social graces and etiquette. We enjoyed getting to know others who joined us each night. It really provided family atmosphere.

God provided wonderfully for me through my four years at WBC through grants, work-study, and scholarship. During my senior year, I remember going home one weekend and sharing with my mother that I needed to pay my tuition before I could take my exam. Before leaving home, my mother asked what would I do about the tuition. My reply was "God will provide." Little did I realize God already had provided because in the award chapel the following week I received a full year scholarship. I graduated debt free. What a wonderful provision from God! Mr. Schuppe had often shared with us how God provided for his family and for each of their children that came along. God always reminds me that the God I serve is the God who says, "For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle on a thousand hills." God is ever faithful!

I spent a year of missionary internship before leaving for my first term to Taiwan in June 1981 with SEND International. For 18 years in Taiwan, I was privileged to be involved in three church plantings: evangelism and discipleship in Taichung, Chungli and Hsinfeng. These contacts at first had no concept of God then slowly became interested in the Bible, and through weekly Bible study, they understood that God is the Creator God who loves them. The Holy Spirit illuminated their eyes and gave them the need of a Savior. There is always great joy in seeing people "turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God." Churches were formed later after a group came to faith in Christ and were discipled. Then they called their own national pastor. In 1994 I began part-time teaching in Taosheng Seminary on Bible survey, discipleship, church planting, church growth, and was involved in teaching and training leaders in China. I have experienced the truth that indeed we are only planters and waterers, but God is the One who gives the increase.

On the field, I served in different capacities in SEND-Taiwan. I was privileged to be the first woman who served in any SEND field council. I coordinated SEND summer programs, chaired the Language and Orientation Committee, served as Conference Moderator, Advisor to the Director on National Church and Mission Relations, on Church Polity Committee. I also served as team leader on two

church planting teams, as well as supervising and mentoring seminary students. Additionally, I led, discipled and trained women. At my home church, I was involved in evangelism, training, teaching adult Sunday School, and coordinating women's ministry and teaching Bible studies.

It has been over twenty-three years since I graduated from WBC. Each day I am grateful to the Lord for the role WBC played in my life and ministry. The impact that WBC has had on me is far reaching, extending to different parts of the world that God has sent me to. This impact will continue as I look forward to a future ministry in teaching, training, mentoring and discipling the next generation of leaders.

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## PREPARED TO TEACH IN SOUTH AFRICA

*Dr. Wilfred Matham (CBS '92)*  
Principal, Evangelical Bible College  
Cape, South Africa



THE SEARCH FOR a seminary that will meet one's needs can prove frustrating. In my case, I initiated contact with CBS in 1980 and received first-hand information from President George Miles and Dr. Homer Heater. It was not until 1988 that I began to seriously consider seminary training. By that time I was completing nearly eighteen years of pastoral and church planting ministry in Swaziland and South Africa. In seeking God's will concerning seminary education, I decided to explore several options. Thus, in addition to being accepted by CBS, I was also accepted by two other studies leading to a Master of Divinity degree. The scales tipped

in favor of CBS, because, in addition to the quality of their study program, CBS was prepared to grant advanced standing based on my previous studies as well as my years of unbroken pastoral ministry. I was also grateful for assistance from CBS in the form of a half-tuition scholarship.

I commenced studies at CBS in 1989, and graduated in 1992 with the Th.M in New Testament. For the first year of studies my family remained in South Africa. But God provided, and they were able to join me for the second year. Christians who assisted with my support were as pleased as I was that there was no need to duplicate work that I had already covered at Bible college. This factor not only reduced the costs of my education, but also meant that I was able to return sooner to the ministry in South Africa.



The CBS emphasis on the original languages, principles and methods of exegesis, and Theology, fitted my needs very well. I was able to increase my knowledge of New Testament Greek, and also add a working knowledge of Hebrew. The CBS faculty was highly proficient in their fields of specialization. But along with that expertise they brought a warm, godly atmosphere to the classroom. Thus, high academic standards were matched with down-to-earth spirituality. As a pastor, I appreciated this approach to studies very much since I have always believed that *content* of spiritual truth should go hand in hand with *relevancy* or *life-relatedness* of truth.

Since 1993 I have had much opportunity to share with others the benefits of my CBS training. I have served full-time at Evangelical Bible College as Instructor in New Testament Greek, Hermeneutics, Homiletics, and, more recently, in Missiology. Our students come from various parts of Africa and we are, thus, able to minister to the African continent through our training program at Cape Town. In addition, there are many opportunities to assist Christians from all denominations through our Extension School program, with centers in Durban, Johannesburg and Port Elizabeth.

I often have opportunity to lead seminars on various biblical issues. The credit for the competence displayed in my teaching clearly is due to the excellent training I received at CBS. That training, coupled with the training I received at Bible college, has proved to be the best preparation for a ministry of training others to handle the Word of God accurately. It has also been a special joy to bring to the classroom years of pastoral experience. While the Evangelical Bible College was the field where I obtained the practical training, CBS helped me to sharpen my abilities and skills and to broaden my knowledge of the inerrant Word of God.

South Africa, like many other countries, needs Bible educators and preachers, who are qualified both academically and spiritually to serve their generation for the glory of God. I am privileged to be a part of a growing number of nationals who have studied overseas and have returned to invest in their native land. I have spent ten years since 1993 in Bible teaching at Evangelical Bible College. I presently serve as Principal of the college, as well as Instructor in New Testament and Missiology.

God has graciously allowed me to further my education right here in South Africa. I have obtained the D.Th. degree from Stellenbosch University in the field of Missiology. The exegetical and theological training received at CBS proved extremely helpful to me in doctoral studies at a secular university. Missiology, like many other disciplines, needs a solid exegetical and theological foundation. I have had reason to thank God many times for CBS and its contribution to my life.

My daughter, Ruth, obtained her BA degree from Washington Bible College and my sons, Chester and Cedric, completed the One Year Certificate at WBC. My wife, Carol, is taking courses here at Evangelical Bible College. She is quite

close to completing the One-Year Certificate program. She also serves as one of the college secretaries.

To all of my former instructors at Capital Bible Seminary I wish to express my heart-felt thanks for your sacrificial service to the Lord in assisting with my training and that of many others who have been "separated unto the gospel of Christ."

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## MAKING AN IMPACT ON EUROPE

*Dr. Lianne Roembke (WBC '67)*  
Educational Cross-Cultural Consultant  
Campus Crusade for Christ  
Magdeburg, (East) Germany



IT WAS PRAYER Band night in the years 1963-1967, and the usual handful of students focused their eyes of prayer on Europe. It is not nice to be in the minority or see a continent, supposedly Christian, overlooked, but the Lord drew my heart to this secularized continent and their growing spiritual needs. As a Bible-Christian Education (C. E.) major (WBC '67), my pedagogical bent was drawn to those of other cultures, particularly the unchurched or those estranged by the church. And with less than 1% of the population evangelical, Europe offered lots of opportunities to engage hearts and minds in discussion,

win the lost, and disciple new Christians for Jesus.

Opportunities for Christian service and summer projects parallel to classroom teaching were valuable in keeping the theoretical teaching practical, plus helping us discover and test our spiritual gifts. Our choir tours offered encounters with young and old, opportunities to give testimony and counsel, and kept us flexible. In those projects and travels we saw the personal side of the faculty, Christianity lived out, giving credibility to our faith. The "approachableness" of most of the faculty made it easier to digest what we were learning. Some of the faculty encouraged us to think analytically and delve deeper. Others were good in applying what we had learned. Early on I was given responsibility in publications, and as a dorm counselor (which probably led to my becoming a "house mother" during

my graduate studies at Wheaton), as well as opportunities to teach in the night school. These seemed to fit well, a prophecy of what was to emerge in the particular combination of teaching (Bible, theology, missions, CE), writing and missionary care in this last decade.

As much as I loved kids, in a brief interlude before grad school at Wheaton, teaching at a Christian Day School showed up my perfectionistic tendencies and my calling to adult education! While at Wheaton Graduate School my vision for Europe increased. After receiving my M.A. in C.E. in 1970, I joined Campus Crusade for Christ, initially to get more experience in campus evangelism before going to Europe to teach C.E. at a Bible Institute. Those two years have turned into 32. After having a year of training at the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus (with the demonstrating radical students) they sent me on to open a new ministry on three campuses in Fargo, ND and in Moorhead, MN. The students were so spiritually ripe there that I experienced my first burnout—so many students coming to faith in Christ to follow-up at once!

Finally the time was right, and I traveled to Europe for the first time—a summer project at the Munich Olympics. I worked on my first multicultural team, and was scared of all the language and cultural differences, but at the same time realizing this was it! Upon returning to America, I was asked to come to the Headquarters and help develop training for our staff (C.E. background came to the fore). On-going field training, Institutes for Biblical Studies plus annual staff conferences for 3,000 staff helped me develop management skills as well. Ever with an eye on Europe, I was thrilled when the European directors asked me to consult with the staff in five European countries on staff development and training the next year. It wasn't long before the USA headquarters yielded to pressure from Europe to release me to their field. In 1975 I made my home in southern Germany (near the French and Swiss borders) and took up responsibilities as assistant to the European Coordinator of Training. It was the beginning of working together with many multicultural teams.

The following year I was made European Training Coordinator, the first woman to hold such a position. It was indeed a challenge to combine travel and consulting to 14 countries, teaching in the Institute of Biblical Studies, organizing the then annual European All Staff Conference (in eight languages!) with my personal language study in the walled city of Berlin. I immersed myself in the culture and language there, far away from English-speaking colleagues. It was a hard, lonely decision but yielded results that have lasted for decades. Recently one of my language helpers, then a student (now Wycliffe's director in Chad) took my course on *Multicultural Teams and Partnerships*, and complimented me on my German (thanks to her and God!). Learning German was important to me, even serving in an administrative-leadership position, because of my personal ministry

of evangelism and discipleship. I wanted to be able to speak about the Lord in the heart-language of the people with whom I lived.

The European Training Coordinator position gave opportunity to consult with CCC on other continents and network with other missions, The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelism, for example. During the Lausanne meeting in the Philippines in 1989 I was already researching the topic of credibility in multi-cultural teams for my doctorate at the University of Basel, Switzerland. It allowed for geographically broader research as well as the inclusion of missionaries, expatriate and national, from many other missions. The researching of the topic grew out of personal experience as well as observations of such teams over the years. There were no known resources at the time so I was encouraged to delve into the issues.

Back home in Germany trying to tie up my research, I was met with monumental obstacles. In our pioneer ministry in East Germany we had a team of volunteer staff willing to work full-time with us when the Berlin Wall fell and Germany was reunited! Now we had 13 to train and I had to move eight hours north of my university! At the University, my main professor retired and the new professors were less friendly to Americans and evangelicals in particular; they added more requirements, now impossible for me to fulfill. As if that weren't enough, saddest of all, my German housemate was taken ill with cancer and died within 11 months. But the Lord's plans being way beyond ours, He made a way to transition to the Evangelical Theological Faculty in Leuven, Belgium and finish my Ph.D. in Theology—a process of eleven years.

My dissertation was published as a book the next year, *Building Credible Multicultural Teams*, in English (William Carey Library) and in German and led to an upsurge of invitations to teach courses, workshops, and seminars (both in German and in English), for many different missions and institutions. Currently, in addition to offering the workshop in English for Campus Crusade, it's also available in Cyprus in a member care (missionary care) context annually and taught as a seminar for missionaries on furlough in Germany. The course is offered for credit at Columbia International University—German campus, Fuller School of World Missions in Pasadena, and Wheaton Graduate School, Thailand extension. In January 2002, the book was awarded the George W. Peters Prize for its contribution to world missions. The Lord has proven Himself faithful and dear in these years of service.

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## BIBLICAL EDUCATION IN NIGERIA

*Dr. Dennis Shelly (WBC '73, CBS '77)*

(serving with Fellowship Int'l Mission)

Bible and Missionary Theological College (BMTC)

Ikwa, Nigeria



I THANK GOD for leading me to WBC and CBS. From my high school days I felt God leading me into Christian ministry. Through the invitation of Mary Ann Kilmer to attend WBC's Evangelism Week and annual banquet at the old campus in Washington, D.C., I was challenged to apply as a WBC student. I was especially excited to come to Washington, D.C. so that I could witness for the Lord.

I was somewhat disappointed when WBC moved to its present location my very first semester. However, from my first semester my Christian service activity was to visit a children's home near the capital. I also remember

the entire student body and faculty going to pass out tracts during the Presidential Inauguration parades.

The godly examples of WBC faculty like Dr. William Miller, Professor Willis Bishop, James Schuppe, and James Bos (along with CBS faculty like Dr. Homer Heater, Dr. Thomas Edgar, Dr. Mulholland, and Pastor Jackson) made a tremendously profound impact upon me. Courses like Principles of Biblical Interpretation, Christian Life, Personal Evangelism, and Pastoral Theology all laid a solid foundation for my present ministries here in Nigeria.

I believe the joy that I received from my studies at WBC and CBS has in a small way been passed on to our graduates here at BMTC. That's the excitement of



seeing 2 Timothy 2:2 in action as God used us to pass on what we have learned to other faithful men and women as they serve the Lord.

Through our practical Christian services at WBC, God helped me as a very shy young man to begin to enjoy ministry in public through involvement in Student Mission Fellowship (SMF) as a Prayer Band leader, along with being Chaplain for the Junior class and SMF President my senior year. Another big “stretcher” was being pianist for the WBC quartet for two years.

Two things I thought I would never want to be – a teacher and a preacher. As a WBC junior, while my other four quartet members were all sophomores, one church asked one of us to preach. I got the call. I put into practice what I was learning in my courses. The message went fine and the people encouraged me. Now I enjoy teaching and preaching as much as any other ministry.

God often uses men of God to see beyond what we can see. In 1972 Brother Joshua Ekpikhe, the President of the Christian Witness Team, Inc. (CWT) in Nigeria, asked President George Miles to find two men to come to help him reopen the Bible and Missionary Training Center (BMTC) in Ikwa Village in southeastern Nigeria. President Miles chose Chester Boyd, a CBS graduate and a mature Christian leader, for this need. Chester had a Plymouth Brethren background like that of Brother Joshua in the Christian Assemblies.

President Miles was also praying about a younger man to join Chester. He was observing and considering me for the position. The first time he approached me about teaching in a small Nigerian Bible College for the summer of 1973, I laughed at him. “Nigeria. No way!” Even though I was SMF President and was very interested in missions, I never saw myself ever going to Africa. When President Miles still could not find someone to join Chester, he challenged me a second time to seriously pray about teaching at BMTC. He saw me as a teacher whom God could use to teach others.

That spring I had already been accepted to attend the Child Evangelism Fellowship Leadership Training Institute in Michigan. After consulting my parents and praying about it, I told President Miles I was willing to go. God led me to BMTC that summer. I really enjoyed teaching young Nigerian men and women who had a great hunger for God’s Word. They witnessed more faithfully than I had ever done. They used the little that they had to serve others and help them know about Him.

I think I learned more from them than they learned from me that summer. Brother Joshua challenged me to consider praying about returning to teach at BMTC that same fall semester. I had already been accepted to attend CBS. I wanted God to direct me. Through reading Psalms and seeing Psalm 16:7, 11 and 32:8, God gave me peace about returning to Nigeria.

God is a God of order. His ways are always best. He leads us step by step, if we follow Him. After teaching at BMTC for two semesters in 1973-74, God led

me back to the USA to attend the CEF Institute and then CBS. I was much more ready for studies. One day during those two semesters I tried to teach all of John 3 in one class. The students got me stuck on John 3:5, and that's all the farther we went in that period. I cried at the end, but God used that and other situations to challenge me to put my best into studies at CBS so that I'd be able to teach others well in the future.

I returned full-time to teach and administer at BMTC in 1977. Since then I have continued to see God's grace providing for me. In 1987 I put a P.S. in my March newsletter to ask my friends to pray about my finding a wife during my furlough that fall. It is amazing how God answers prayer, for the man who had printed my newsletters for 10 years introduced me to his daughter, Coletta! She had been a missionary nurse for 11 years with HCJB ministries in Quito, Ecuador. In December I proposed to her on the phone and she accepted. We were married in July 1988. God has given us two children, Dwight (12) and Stephanie (10), both of whom were born in Nigeria.

To prepare for more effective ministry, I completed my Ph.D. studies at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in 1996. We've continued serving the Lord here at BMTC since then. We've seen over 250 students graduate and return to their people for ministry throughout Nigeria, Ghana, and Sudan. Nineteen BMTC graduates have come to WBC to earn their B.A. degrees. Some have gone on to attend CBS for their Th.M. or Master's studies, while others have gone to other American seminaries or universities for their doctorates.

They have returned to Nigeria and are serving the Lord, even though life is very hard here compared to the many comforts found in the USA. Over 70% of our BMTC alumni are in full-time ministries for the Lord in pastorates in large and small churches or Bible Colleges and Seminaries. Some have met their spouses at BMTC and are serving Him together. Others are teaching Bible Knowledge courses in local high schools, planting churches in village situations, or are laymen in their churches and communities. On top of all this Bible training, some also have learned four or five languages as well.

I thank God for how He has used WBC and CBS in my life. I know that He has done the same in thousands of other lives around the world who have also heard God's call in their lives. I pray that God will continue raising up His own people to faithfully support WBC and CBS through their prayer and financial support. I also earnestly pray that God will keep leading men and women, of all ages and backgrounds, to come to study at these wonderful schools. Praise the Lord!

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## BRINGING CHRIST TO THE MILITARY

*Randy Dollinger (WBC '80)*  
Chaplain (Major), United States Army



WASHINGTON BIBLE COLLEGE has served as a solid foundation for my ministry as an Army Chaplain. My wife Abigail (Hutcheson) and I graduated from WBC in 1980. I serve as the Senior Instructor of the Chaplain Career Course at the United States Army Chaplain School. Although teaching is my main mission, I also am an assistant pastor of a 500 member Gospel Congregation, Vice President of the Protestant Men of the Chapel, and board member of Cadence International's Victory Ranch. Abigail serves as President of the Protestant Women of the Chapel here at Fort Jackson in South Carolina. She also uses her quilting skills as an outreach ministry at a local church.

Abigail and I were always willing to serve in whatever ministry God led us. The training at WBC helped us in a variety of ministries: Sunday school teacher, youth leader, Christian camp counselor and director, Christian schoolteacher, missionary, pastor, and Bible college professor. As we considered all of the things that we could do, there was one thing that God laid on our hearts to do. We felt that the Lord was calling us to serve in the Army.

I first served in the Army Reserves as a chaplain while pastoring a church. In 1986, I entered active duty at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The Bible Study Methods Classes at WBC proved beneficial because I was unable to carry a heavy commentary in my rucksack. As a paratrooper, I only parachuted once without a Bible, and I broke my ankle on that jump. Not that I am superstitious, but on my next jump I carried 35 Gideon New Testaments! They were stuffed in my rucksack,

in my gas mask carrying-case, and in my pockets. It was one of the softest landings I ever had. I gave these Bibles to soldiers who like to know that they are carrying "jump qualified" Bibles. While I was never a star at WBC in soccer or cross-country, the physical training paid off handsomely in a ministry that requires strength, endurance, and spiritual fitness.

My next assignment sent me to Camp Casey, Korea, where I served on an unaccompanied tour as a chaplain for an Armor Battalion. Our unit supported an orphanage. I was surprised to learn that the directors of the orphanage knew one of my WBC professors, Dr. Kim. He assumed the pastorate of one of the ten largest churches in Korea. While in Bible College, Dr. Kim would take me along with him to preach in the Korean churches in the Washington D.C. area. He preached to the older congregation in Korean, and I spoke to the young people in English. Afterwards we ate at the pastors' homes where I learned about Korean culture and cuisine. Those experiences proved helpful while serving in Korea. One of the highlights of my tour in Korea was speaking at Dr. Kim's church. I told the congregation, "It is great to have my teacher translate for me. If I make any mistakes, he will correct them for me."

Abigail and I learned to deal with hardship during the Korea tour of duty separation. I discovered that it did not pay to complain. I wrote Abigail, "The heater broke on my HMMWV so my lungs froze, and they found a rat in the water supply, so there is a water shortage." She replied, "You think you have it bad? I have the boys." Abigail not only cared for our three young sons, but she also ministered to family members still at Fort Bragg, whose soldiers had deployed on Desert Storm. Our foundation for surviving family hardship was laid in the Christian Home and Family class at WBC.

We endured another difficult time when I deployed to Bosnia as part of the Implementation Force and she remained with the boys in Germany. I refer to these times as a "blessed misery." It is during these hard times that soldiers come to know the Savior. Every week someone accepted Christ at Comanche Base Camp. I baptized several soldiers in a container used to ship large engines. As the brigade chaplain, I also had responsibility for soldiers in Hungary. When I went there to visit the troops, I had the privilege of baptizing soldiers in a crate lined with plastic. (Not all the places I have baptized people were quite as rustic. As a chaplain, I have also baptized new believers in the San Francisco Bay and the Mediterranean Sea.) I will always remember Dr. Miles' injunction, "You should always be ready to preach, pray, sing, or die at a moment's notice." It is that ever-ready attitude that has opened numerous doors of opportunity.

Ministry opportunities abound in garrison as well as during deployments. People make appointments with me just to get saved! When people talk to doctors, they talk about what ails them. When people talk to chaplains, they talk about religion. When I talk about religion, I talk about Christ. As I was walking through

the battalion area at Fort Bragg, a soldier asked if he could talk with me. I said, "Absolutely, let's talk." He said he would like to come by my office the next day at 0900 hr. He made that appointment and came in essentially asking to accept the Lord. I wrote the time of his decision in the Gideon Bible that I had used to lead him to the Lord. When I was stationed in Korea, he tracked me down to let me know he was still following the Lord. Later in Germany, he saw my name on my HMMWV window along with our tag, "God Squad." He waited at the Dining Facility until I arrived just to tell me that he was still following the Lord. (Soldiers know they can find the chaplain at the chow point!) We met again at Fort Jackson when he attended the Army Recruiting School. He still had the joy of the Lord.

After sixteen years of military service, Abigail and I, too, still have the joy of the Lord. We thank God for the foundation we received at WBC. At WBC I learned to play the guitar, which is a lot lighter to pack than the organ Abigail learned to play. Dr. Fowler made theology live for me so that I could carry it in my head and heart rather than just in a notebook. He was so influential in our lives that we asked him to conduct our wedding service. Other people at WBC influenced us who were not teachers *per se*. We learned a servant's heart from people like the Blevins and Buzby families.

The ministry opportunities like Open Air Campaigners helped us develop boldness. Fellow students also helped to build us. The summer camping ministry helped me develop counseling skills in a field environment. Several fellow WBC students worked with us in the summer at various camps. Ernie Baker (1980) served with us on multiple occasions and now serves on the IFCA chaplains' board, which endorsed me for active service. Student Missions Fellowship taught us to pray and be willing to go anywhere and do anything. Tom Schaeffer (1979) was an SMF leader and also serves as an Army Chaplain.

Washington Bible College made the Bible real in our day-to-day lives. Professors, workers, and fellow students at WBC both loved and lived the Word. It wasn't just the fine Bible education that made the difference; it was the total joy of serving God. The heart of the matter is – it's the heart that matters.



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## CBS PREPARED ME TO BE A PASTOR

*Rev. Jonathan Liu (CBS '89)*

Senior Pastor, Chinese Bible Church of Maryland  
Bethesda, Maryland



BEFORE I MOVED to the Washington, D.C. area, I had been considering continuing my theological education. When God called me to pastor the Chinese Bible Church of Maryland in 1982, I began to seek a Seminary to attend. During my search I saw an advertisement in *Christianity Today* for Capital Bible Seminary and applied. I was accepted and started my years of study at CBS. I graduated in 1989 with a Master of Divinity degree.

When I enrolled I was a full-time pastor. I am very thankful that CBS, being mindful of full-time professionals and people in ministry, offered evening classes. Taking evening classes allowed me to pursue my education without interfering with my ministry. Because I was an evening student and I had to commute, I missed the normal student body life, and opportunities to participate in other activities of the school. Nevertheless, I enjoyed and treasured the time with the fellow students and professors in all those evenings.

Due to my workload at the church, I could only take one course per quarter. It took me six years to finish all the requirements as a transfer student. I thank the Lord for His faithfulness in allowing me to continue for those many evenings so that I could complete my studies at CBS.



After my graduation from CBS, I continued to serve at my church for 20 years. The Lord has helped me to make good use of the training I received at CBS. Through the preaching and teaching of God's Word, combined with the cooperation and unity of my fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, the church has grown from one church to five churches. The Lord has also laid upon my heart a burden for missions. Since graduation, I have traveled to a number of places to share the Gospel and to equip the saints of the local churches.

I am deeply grateful to all the professors at CBS for their wisdom and their skillful teaching of God's Word. I especially admire Dr. Edgar for his knowledge of the Greek New Testament. His classes have made a deep impact upon my life and my ministry. I believe that a church should be established by solid preaching and teaching of the Word of God. The strong emphasis of Capital Bible Seminary on the Bible has made a phenomenal difference in my ministry.

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## THERE'S A SONG IN MY HEART

*Helen Millson (WBC '55)*

Retired Choir Director and Government Worker  
Harrisonburg, Virginia



I don't remember when I first saw the light of day, but it was a long time ago, in Youngstown, Ohio. More importantly, I do remember when I first saw THE light. When I was 13, two women from the Moody Bible Institute came to upstate New York to teach a Bible Study in our one-room schoolhouse. It was through their ministry that I became a Christian and

Jesus became "The Light of My Life."

The next big step in my life came when I met a Washington Bible College student, who invited me to go to Word of Life camp, located at Schroon Lake, NY. We drove there and stayed for a week. At the end of that wonderful time, Jack Wyrzten spoke at our campfire service. When he challenged us to dedicate our lives to serving Jesus, I went forward to throw my stick into the fire to signify that my life belonged completely to the Lord. By doing this, I publicly acknowledged that I was willing to do whatever He chose.

When I returned to Washington D.C., I felt that the Lord wanted me to attend school full-time. So I immediately resigned my job at the Pentagon, shared my testimony with my co-workers, and said my "good-byes." To my surprise, they presented me with a Scofield Reference Bible signed on the cover sheet by Samuel Blumenthal, my Jewish boss. That Bible was the most beautiful thing that I had ever owned, and his signature truly meant a great deal to me.

When I started WBC in 1951, I fell in love for the first time in my life – with the campus, faculty and students. Most of all, I fell in love with studying the Word of God. I even loved my Christian service assignment, directing the choirs at Barcroft Bible Church (BBC). I enjoyed the challenge of locating new music. My

WBC training equipped me to ensure that the words were Scriptural and that the music supported what the words were teaching. I loved this assignment so much that I remained at BBC for forty-three years directing choirs, leading Pioneer Clubs, and teaching Sunday school. I count it an honor to have shared His Word through music.

Almost 50 years after going to Word of Life camp for the first time, I had the privilege of working there. For four years, I directed a new choir every week. Choir directing was never my *job*, but always my *joy*. Another blessing this past year was directing the choir at Faith Bible Church, in Harrisonburg, VA. Now that I have retired, I find numerous opportunities to serve the Lord here at the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community.

I thank the Lord every day for the solid foundation in the Bible that I received at Washington Bible College and Barcroft Bible Church. My heart continues to sing with the songwriters, "His Name is Wonderful" and "I'm so Glad I'm a Part of the Family of God!"

May God richly bless you and keep you singing for Him.

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## EQUIPPED TO BE A PRESIDENT

*Dr. A. Charles Ware (CBS '92)*

President, Crossroads Bible College  
Indianapolis, Indiana

A KNIFE THAT is not properly tempered and sharpened dulls easily, ceases to cut effectively, and is left unused in a drawer. In a similar manner, the work of ministry needs proper preparation and training. This is a reality that needs to be faced sooner or later. When my wife, Sharon, and I came to the metro D.C. area to provide leadership for a local church ministry, we heard about Capital Bible Seminary, and I soon enrolled. Thanks to the flexible schedule of the school, with convenient evening classes, I was able to fulfill my heavy ministry obligations, while at the same time pursuing my advanced education.

Working full-time in the day and attending evening classes, plus maintaining a family life, is not an easy task. The professors, students, and classes were a great source of encouragement and inspiration. Like many students, I needed discipline to study the Scriptures, counsel and friendships as my wife and I were involved in a growing ministry with a growing family. In retrospect, I see my years at CBS as critical for my personal spiritual survival as well as my ministry development. The forge of seminary has resulted in a well-tempered and sharpened ministry tool that brings credit to the Lord and to CBS.

During my years at CBS, the Lord deepened my appreciation for the Word of God, my ability to accurately communicate it, and my desire to serve where called. I graduated from CBS in 1992 with my Master of Divinity degree. I now serve as president of Crossroads Bible College, senior pastor of Crossroads Bible Church, and chairman on the Committee on Ethnic Diversity for the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges, among other offices.

The academic rigors of CBS have helped prepare me for my writing and speaking ministry. I thank the Lord for using me to write magazine articles and books on the subject of racial reconciliation, as well as for providing me numerous op-

portunities to speak around the country—from doing a one-minute spot on the Moody radio station to speaking at racial reconciliation conferences.

As an author, pastor, speaker, and teacher, I have a greater appreciation of the gifted teachers and the role of godly friends. Until one is actually a pastor and teacher of the Word, one does not fully understand all that goes into preparing and delivering a message. While it may look easy to speak for 45 minutes on a Sunday morning, there is a huge amount of physical, spiritual, and emotional work that goes into researching, writing, practicing, and delivering the message. Then there is the follow-up after the message with the people who are impacted by it. This is when the practical work of ministry begins.

The powerful preparation of the godly teachers at CBS has made a significant impact upon my ministry and life, and I can not laud them highly enough. It is one thing to prepare students to handle and dispense the Word of God. It is yet quite another to impart to students how to effectively shepherd a flock and minister to hurting people.

These faithful professors gave deeply of their own time to make their classes so effective, and the time they gave apart from class, ministering to me, deeply touched me. I would have to say that I benefited as much from my in-class time as I did with one-on-one ministry time.

My prayer that the investment of so many in my life, family, and ministry will bear great dividends both now and throughout eternity is being answered by the way that God is using me. It is humbling to be honored as Alumnus of the Year (2002) by Baptist Bible College of PA, to receive the John M. Perkins award, and other blessings. This is the result of good preparation (for which Capital Bible Seminary is clearly a part), a willing heart, and an obedient spirit.

Capital Bible Seminary is the refiner's forge that God uses to strengthen, sharpen, and polish those moving into full-time ministry. I must also add that the lives of those whose vocations do not involve a pulpit are equally well served by the anvil and hammer of the professors and staff of Capital Bible Seminary.

Many people think that a seminary is just for pastors and missionaries. The truth is, seminary is for anyone who is serious about growing deeper in his or her faith. I can not recommend CBS highly enough. No matter what your mission or calling, no matter if you can go full-time or take evening classes...you belong at Capital Bible Seminary.

If you only take one course, you will benefit. If you are not certain of your path in life, perhaps being at CBS will be the place that God begins to clearly define and direct your path. Many have found this to be true.

On the occasion of the 100<sup>th</sup> year of preaching and teaching the Word of God, I wish to send to the school my heartiest congratulations and prayers for God's continued hand upon your wonderfully effective ministry.

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## TRUE THEOLOGY: FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

*Jackie Smallbones (WBC '77)*

Chair, Religion Department and  
Associate Professor, Religion and Christian Education  
Northwestern College, Orange City, Iowa



I SPENT THE happiest four years of my life attending Washington Bible College. Little did I realize that when I came here, God would do such an amazing work overcoming my shyness. Nor could I possibly envision how confident I would become through the development of my intellectual acuity, professional communication skills, and personal theology.

In 1973 I came to Washington, D.C. from South Africa. Not only was I an international student (While I referred to myself as a foreigner, Dean Woodburn insisted I was an 'international'!), but I was also a non-traditional student, having already spent seven years in the business world before attending college.

Coming to WBC is akin to wheeling a shopping cart around a grocery store. You get

those things you need to equip you to feed yourself and others. More than anything else, God knew that I hungered for personal relationships and intellectual challenge. Because I was painfully shy, reaching out to others was dreadfully hard. Consequently, I had few friends and was very lonely. Academically, I was smart enough to have completed through high school by barely cracking a book, but I needed to be intellectually and academically challenged in order to realize my true potential.



While I came to the WBC learning table very famished, I left completely satiated. God met me where I was, and used the incredibly caring faculty and staff to give me my heart's desire. God's blessing of me in these two specific areas through this great institution has transformed my life. God turned my weaknesses into strengths, and has not ceased to use my testimony to help others come to a deeper knowledge of and love for Him.

It was comforting to learn that I was not the only non-traditional full-time student. I was astounded that I quickly began to make friends with others my own age. As they reached out to me through their compassion and love, I began to open up to the world of people.

As I look back over the years since graduation in 1977, I know that this gift has been essential in my spiritual development. I have always loved Jesus' promise in John 15, "I now call you *friends*." Through the transforming and far-reaching effects of the friendships that I have been able to develop over the years, thanks to my time at WBC, my relationship with Jesus has changed dramatically. These loving people were "Jesus with skin on" for me and unknowingly through their actions they have shown me how to have a close and personal friendship with Jesus.

My second WBC blessing was intellectual stimulation and challenge, specifically in learning to research, study and write. The most important course I took was Iris Maurer's "English Composition." Ms. Maurer was a taskmaster. We used to joke that she was all law and no mercy because she never let us get away with anything other than perfection.

One day in class I had an epiphany. Ms. Maurer had returned the first draft of my first major research paper outline. Across the top was written in bright red ink, "See me." We all knew that meant, "This is lousy and must be redone!" While staring at my paper, it suddenly hit me—God had called me to leave college! I skipped into her office, ready to joyfully exclaim that God had revealed to me that I should quit college immediately, and, therefore, I didn't need to bother redoing my outline. Before I could open my mouth, Ms. Maurer gently explained the problem and sent me back to make the minor change.

Since leaving college I have learned a new meaning for the Hebrew word that is translated "*mercy*." According to Walter Bruggemann, mercy is about "making commitments and keeping commitments." This is what Iris Maurer did for us. She was not all law and no mercy. On the contrary, she was full of mercy. She had made a commitment to us—we would not leave her class without being able to write credible research papers. I have always admired her commitment. Making and fulfilling commitments has enabled me to maintain a strong witness for Christ. Whatever I teach, I model this trait for my students.

After I graduated from Washington Bible College I worked with Child Evangelism Fellowship for a few years, both in America and South Africa. My service in South Africa gave me a longing to help churches in their Christian education

programs. I returned to America and earned a Masters Degree in Christian Education from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and began teaching at Rosebank Bible College in Johannesburg, South Africa. Rosebank was a very small college and I taught a wide range of courses including Introduction to the Bible, Public Speaking, Research Writing (I bless Ms. Maurer once again), Christian Education, and even Introduction to Theology. I will confess that the course I disliked teaching the most was Theology. After just one year, I pleaded with my boss not to make me teach it again.

Then I had a major challenge in my spiritual life. Up until then, I had taken for granted that it was easy to be a Christian. I had grown up in a Christian home, attended a Christian college, and made wonderful Christian friends. I had so much support that I never gave it serious thought until I began to teach in a Christian college. Now that others looked to me for spiritual support, the pressure was on.

I didn't have the answers to major life questions or the assurances that the Christian way was the only way. I had no answers, at least none that came from deep within. But then, the Lord reminded me of my theological training and the ways that He had assured, comforted, and ministered to me through various people and circumstances. Revisiting these experiences in my mind, it became easy and obvious how to minister the love of Christ in practical ways to others.

As I look back over nearly twenty years since that turning point in my personal ministry, I realize that I was supported through this crisis by the two gifts I received at WBC – my friends and my ability to research and learn. I came to the conclusion that only one thing mattered in life. As J. I. Packer maintains in his classic, *Knowing God*, only one thing makes life worthwhile—knowledge of the Triune God. This knowledge is understood from the Hebrew perspective as an “intimate, experiential, personal relationship.”

Knowing God became and has remained the only real goal in my personal life as well as my goal in teaching. I seek to teach in ways that will invoke in my learners the desire to know God in this deeply personal and life-transforming way. This is the legacy that each Christian should strive to leave in their personal, family, ministry, and vocational life. If I have passed that on, it is enough.

With this genuine epiphany, I discovered theology. I suddenly realized that every Christian is a theologian because we have been called to be friends, and no longer slaves. Friendships can only develop when we are willing to be intentional about getting to know someone else. Getting to know God means taking theology seriously. As a result of this new perspective, I went back to my boss and pleaded not only to teach the theology course that I had disliked so much again, but also to teach it over a longer period.

Over the years, I have learned that prayer and theology are intimately related. The 4<sup>th</sup> Century saint, Evagrius, defined a theologian as “one whose prayer is true.” Today, I explain to my students that they must learn to read the Bible theologically.

By this, I specifically mean prayerfully wondering, "Who are you, God?" Theology is prayerful and personal. It is about wonder and awe. These form the basis of worship, which is the essence of the Christian life.

My friendship with the Triune God continues to grow as I continue to learn more and more what it truly means to prayerfully wonder, "Who are you, God?" I will forever be grateful for the lessons learned at WBC that began the journey deeper into God. It has helped to mould me into a woman who delights in study, friendship, and fellowship with God. These are the gifts I hope to pass on to my students even today.

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## FROM GLITTER TO GOLD

*Dr. Ok Cha Soh (WBC '90, CBS '94)*  
Professor, Washington Bible College  
Lanham, Maryland



ENROLLING AS A student at Washington Bible College in August of 1987 was the pivotal moment of my life. The move from the glamorous life of a high-profile model to a humble professor was the culmination of an amazing series of events, with the fingerprint of God clearly evident along the way.

As a young child, I had no way of learning about Jesus Christ because I was raised in a Buddhist family. However, through God's grace, I was blessed to attend a Christian school founded by American missionaries. I became a Christian in eighth grade, in my hometown of Seoul, South Korea.

After college I moved to Hong Kong. I became a famous model, frequently being featured on TV, in newspapers, and in prestigious magazines. I studied the latest Paris fashions, and shopped throughout Europe to keep my wardrobe trendy. I was one of the most popular personalities in Hong Kong. I socialized with famous movie stars and celebrities. (One of my close friends was Bruce Lee, the famous Kung Fu star.)

After this exciting phase of my life, I returned to Seoul and started a new chapter as a businesswoman with the Hyatt International Hotel. With God's blessing, I was again at the top of the world. My nickname became "Ambassador Soh." I was the center of attention and lived like Cinderella, appearing on mass media again as a successful career woman and receiving fan mail. When I visited America, I traveled by private jet and chauffeur-driven limousine. I thought I had found my niche

in life. However, God had a different plan for me. In 1986, following His leading, I gave up my dream life.

This move did not come without great struggle. I simply could not understand why I had to give up my brilliant career. I was like a child of the Israelites in the wilderness, leaving behind in Egypt the comfortable life I had led. I experienced both psychological and physical pain, and had absolutely no idea how my life would unfold. I felt like a lonely, lost sheep in the desert, but God knew where He was leading me. Jehovah Jireh!

After reflection and prayer, I had no choice other than to surrender my life to His almighty hand. I realized that I was under His control. Based upon where my life had led me so far, who would have ever thought that my next step would be to attend Washington Bible College? Although at that time I had never even heard of WBC, it has become my home and my family since my arrival for the fall semester of 1987.

Arriving here was like skydiving: "Into Your hand, I commit myself." I did not know what was still ahead of me. Having already been through college once, I definitely did not want to study again! Instead, I wanted to do something else, but once again it did not work out my way. God was faithfully guiding me step-by-step. He did not rush or jump, much as I wished He would. Instead, I had to trust Him day by day.

I committed myself to God to be a faithful student as a part of my stewardship of the blessing I had received. With His amazing grace, He took care of all my needs. I tried to be faithful in the little things and learned to be content with my simple and humble life. I did not miss my previous fame and adulation. It was fine with me that I no longer went shopping in Paris. I settled into a tiny efficiency apartment in Collamore on the WBC campus. My life became a life of study as a serious student. I lived happily in that little nest for 14 years.

The WBC family answered my numerous questions and addressed my various concerns. They welcomed and loved me, as they have continued to do so for the past 15 years. Their abundant Christ-centered love and encouragement gave me the confidence and strength to persevere in my student days. WBC met my need for "belonging" in a foreign land. Leaving family, friends, and culture behind me to pursue a radically new endeavor was frightening, but the WBC connection became my support system. This is one of the most unique assets of this school and greatest blessings for all students, foreign or not. To this day, this blessing continues. I still feel relieved whenever I travel and return to the welcoming haven of the campus.

I spent long hours at my desk studying. My eyes often felt heavy and my back hurt. After all, I was not used to studying for many years. I prayed to God, "Lord, if you want me to study, please help me get rid of all these problems." He certainly

heard my prayers. God took care of my needs like a caring mother and a faithful father.

Although I spoke English fairly well before coming to WBC, all the theological terms and Bible words were completely foreign to me. I had to memorize biblical names, vocabulary, and Bible verses – in English! This made the task doubly hard. I placed vocabulary memos on the kitchen sink, bathroom mirror, and in my car. Getting an “A” was not my goal, but doing my best, whether in business or Bible, was a focus by which I lived.

While I was a student at WBC, the godly teaching and ministry of such people as Dr. David Sang Bok Kim, President Dr. Harry Fletcher, Profs. Chris Doerfler, David Gough, and Phil Béna blessed and inspired me. In addition, other faculty and staff touched my heart. These godly people were role models and mentors. When I felt lonely, they comforted me. When I was weak, they upheld me in Christ. When I struggled, they challenged me. More than merely teaching curriculum, they taught me how to live, love, and minister. One of the greatest joys of my life is that by their example they are still influencing my life.

Dr. Kim was so burdened with church ministries and lectures around the world, yet never showed tiredness or frustration toward others or me. Whenever I knocked at his office door to ask questions, he always welcomed me, helped me, and encouraged me. He was an oasis in the desert. “Do your best and leave the result to God” was how Dr. Kim always challenged students. It became my axiom from then on.

Dr. Fletcher was a leader with great compassion, encouragement, and vision, especially for international students. I was impressed with him and noticed that he was very faithful in small things, taking care of needs while at the same time striving toward his great vision to serve the Lord.

Prof. Chris Doerfler kindly helped me with private English lessons to improve my writing. At that time, she also worked part-time in the kitchen as well as in her full-time teaching. To my amazement, she refused to accept an honorarium from me. She truly touched my heart with her Christ-like servanthood.

Profs. David Gough and Phil Béna were and still are great role models for me to follow. They were always available when I needed help. They constantly encouraged me, and demonstrated a caring spirit.

In every corner of the WBC campus, from the Academic Affairs office to the Maintenance Department, I felt at home. The faculty and staff became my family. I used to run around the campus and felt that I was the wealthiest woman in the world. I had the whole campus, a big gymnasium, a library, a beautiful walk, and green trees all around. What else could I have asked for, even if I was a millionaire?

“God, You will increase and I will decrease” (Jn. 3:30). That was my prayer, and I once again dedicated my life to God when I graduated from WBC. In reality,



it certainly was not easy to “decrease.” There were struggles and times of loneliness as a single woman in a foreign country. However, I was amazed at how much I grew emotionally and spiritually through my time at WBC and CBS. I learned to be content though abased. I learned that “When I am weak, I am strong” as the apostle Paul said. It was the people, not the buildings, which made the difference.

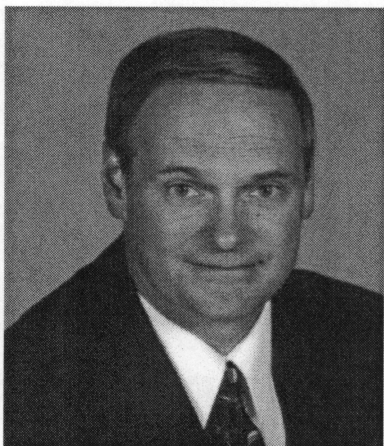
Now, I serve Christ at WBC as a professor. Where I once modeled clothes and fashion trends, I now model the love of Jesus Christ. I continue to challenge students with the philosophy of this institution—**Love + Compassion + Action = Peace and Joy**. Wherever God sends me in the future, I will use this formula to be salt and light.

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## GOD WORKS WITH THE MIND

*Dr. Steve Waterhouse (CBS '82)*

Pastor, Westcliff Bible Church  
Amarillo, Texas



A FORMER EDITOR of *Christianity Today* one time confessed that in eighteen years as a Christian author he had never personally told a single unbeliever the Gospel. By contrast to this example, Dr. Heater has taught in the Capital Seminary chapel that the goal of WBC/CBS is to produce “scholarly servants.” This philosophy of ministry mirrors God’s own passion for both truth and love of people, (“speaking the truth in love,” Eph. 4:15). Paul refers to the annoyance of a noisy gong or a clashing cymbal (1 Cor. 13:1). Perhaps in modern life we can relate better to a washing

machine with an unbalanced load. The result is a jolt with each spin. God wants His leaders to pursue scholarship and then to use that truth to serve a sick world.

Capital Bible Seminary was for me comparable to a teaching hospital or a military academy. The point of all that detailed knowledge was an application to an injured and diseased world and also preparation to defend the faith in a terrible spiritual war. Some of the best years of my life were spent at my beloved seminary on the edge of the capital city of a great but spiritually needy nation. If I were young, I would still choose Capital Bible Seminary as a place to follow God with a full heart.

During the various holidays and semester breaks, my dear friend, Ken Wiest (CBS 1983), and I would travel together back home to Michigan. At this time my younger brother, Mark, had developed schizophrenia, a serious mental disorder. One night he was screaming at non-existent beings only he could see and hear. He

tore light fixtures from the wall, threw Christian plaques, and ripped up books. While Mark was eventually treated and has now partially recovered, during those years neither church nor state had any idea how to support my parents. We just suffered in isolation and confusion. Psychiatric theories of the time often blamed families for causing a loved one to go "crazy." At one point the mental hospital would not even let us in to see Mark. Our home church, Factoryville Bible Church, is one of the best churches anywhere, but this problem was understandably beyond their ability for ministry.

My wife and I were engaged during my time at Capital. She was a secretary at Radio Bible Class in Grand Rapids. While a six hundred-mile courtship can be rough, we had known each other since birth. Our parents had been classmates at Grand Rapids School of the Bible when we were born. They also shared the rent on a large house. When my parents brought me home from the hospital, the couple in the other apartment decided to have a baby. Marilyn is nine months younger than I. We might be the only husband and wife in the world to have the same address on our birth certificates. We were delivered by the same doctor and brought home to the same house.

During a summer break from CBS, I proposed to her on the second date. She waited for me for two years, as seminary days were deep poverty for me. I graduated one Saturday, and we were married the next Saturday. We have three children: Carlton, Nathan and Rachel. After a short ministry at Morrison Cove Baptist Church in Pennsylvania, God called us to Westcliff Bible Church in Amarillo, Texas. We have served God in the same church since 1985.

From the beginning, I have tried to be balanced in both Bible study and applied ministry, i.e., evangelism. Families of the mentally ill comprise a totally neglected target group for evangelism and counseling. There are ministries for prisoners, international students, the military, the homeless, and still other categories with fewer people than the 2,000,000 families of the persons with schizophrenia. Westcliff Bible Church had no idea we could evangelize these families, as hospital confidentiality makes it difficult to identify them.

By 1994 I had finished a book that applies the Bible to the specific needs among families of the mentally ill. God knows the Waterhouses have a double Ph.D. in family pain arising from a relative's mental illness. Theology prescribes, but psychology can be helpful in describing a precise problem. Writing a chapter on genetic research strained my competence, but the rest of the book simply applies the Bible to guilt, anger at God, fears, stigma, isolation, family breakdown under stress, depression, questions about the value of suffering, and the value before God of people who will not achieve by societal standards. The final chapter of the book deals with the difference between demonic influence and mental illness. This book was part of my doctoral work at Dallas Seminary.

In Isaiah 6, Isaiah sees a vision of God and with hope and enthusiasm offers to be sent into ministry. God tells him to go but warns that others might not listen. No Christian publisher wanted a book on mental illness. No one seemed to see the potential for evangelism and ministry. No pastors' conference or college accepted offers of lectures on mental illness. However, what is impossible with man is possible with God. To my utter astonishment, He instead opened the unsaved world to ministry. Westcliff Bible Church took the risk to self-publish *Strength for His People: A Ministry to Families of the Mentally Ill*.

The secular and dominantly liberal National Alliance for the Mentally Ill has been open to speeches or book exhibits in San Antonio, Nashville, San Diego, Austin, Albuquerque, Chicago, Ft. Wayne, and Washington, D.C. Various state governments have paid for me to give speeches in which they invite families to a hospital auditorium, and I give them the Gospel. The Mormons sent a plane ticket to Salt Lake City, filled the Marriott ballroom for a lecture on mental illness, and bought 300 books. A pharmaceutical company paid for a speech in Houston evangelizing families of the mentally ill. Military chaplains from Air Force Academy, San Diego Naval Hospital, and others order the book, as do prisons and rescue missions.

Weird Hollywood publications which stress the occult interviewed me (along with the producer of *The Exorcist*!) asking about the difference between mental illness and demons. They asked why there were more demons in Bible days than now and printed most of my answer. My answer was because demons were then opposing the Son of God, whose work was to die for our sins and provide salvation. Evidently, God takes pleasure in using 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox as a tool to dispense truth. Shortly afterwards a man called me while racing the LA freeway and said he was being attacked by demons. I suspect he read the article in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* magazine. I told him to pull over and pray to trust Jesus as Savior.

WABC radio in New York City called after a particularly horrific murder. They told me the whole city was talking about a grandmother who had poisoned her granddaughter, claiming the girl was demon possessed. Would I accept an interview and calls from the public? While on hold I frantically scribbled answers on post-it notes with every possible bizarre question that might come up. They held the line for an hour. I thought they would cancel the interview, but instead the delay caused the interview to take place right after the noon news. The interviewer tried to corner me into criticizing Catholic priests, who worry about demon-possession as holding to primitive worldviews. I could picture lunchrooms in skyscrapers, and people stuck in cabs listening to the local buzz about the murder.

It was one of these occasions when time seems to stop. Like Nehemiah, I gave a quick prayer for eloquence. "Friends of New York, this grandmother is no doubt mentally ill. Still, do not disparage the priests who warn you of Satan. Instead place your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, God's Son who died for our sin and rose

again.” The host could not wait to dump me, but I had been introduced as a world expert in this field. “Thank you, Dr. Waterhouse, for answering our questions today . . .” click! TV stations in Atlanta, Dallas, and Miami have done shows. ABC News.com, The Discovery Channel, and the Toronto newspaper have asked about mental illness.

*Strength for His People* has been distributed to about 30,000 professionals and families in all states and about 15 other nations. God has worked in the hearts of some world-renowned secular psychiatrists. One example would be an unexpected endorsement by E. Fuller Torrey. His book is used across the world as a standard reference on schizophrenia and is available in Barnes and Noble. He tells his readers to write to Westcliff Bible Church for spiritual help. He sent the church a donation to print more books. We have had orders from Johns Hopkins Medical School, and a Harvard Medical School brain researcher wanted six autographed copies.

God has unlimited power and a great sense of humor. Perhaps in time this book will even make it into standard Christian bookstores. Recently, to our great joy and relief, *Focus on the Family* became the very first Christian bookstore to carry the book. We are now working together for future ministries. As a tribute to God’s sovereignty, He first opened doors in the best possible bookstore for a ministry of this specialized nature. In time, families of the mentally ill will become another target group for evangelism and nurture. They are a field “white unto harvest,” and the Christian world will eventually see the potential for ministry.

Let me again mention the need for balance between study and applied service. My dream for life was to become a Bible scholar, not so much a counselor or evangelist. For twenty years I have researched, written and edited a systematic theology book, *Not By Bread Alone: An Outlined Guide to Bible Doctrine*. It is nearly 600 pages long, with fine print covering the doctrinal issues pastors need to keep churches doctrinally pure in our times. Only God can write a perfect book. My theology book is flawed. (Try writing a theology book with a frantic person on line two thinking she is demon-possessed!) I plead guilty to having a few “typos.” Still, this book is a lifetime effort to follow God’s Word and to promote sound doctrine in a new generation.

God is merciful and His power has no limits. To teach me my complete need for Him and confidence in His power, no publisher would read the manuscript of the theology book. No bookstore would carry it. Had it not been for previous experience I would have given up. Indifference to twenty years of labor results in the same feeling that a mother would have if someone tells her “Your baby is ugly!”

We are saved by faith without work, but we work by faith. If we are honest, we sometimes have little faith that God can still work in a post-Christian culture. After pleading for endorsements in all direction with no response, I decided to send a sample chapter to Dr. Charles Ryrie. I reasoned that my cry for help was against

the odds. Dr. Ryrie owes me no favors. The only time I met him I served him ice tea in a restaurant when I was fifteen. He deserves time for either retirement or for personal projects he chooses. As a rule, he does not give endorsements. He should not be pestered with unsolicited manuscripts. However, doctrine matters!

To my amazement, Dr. Ryrie read the material immediately and responded literally the next day with a kind endorsement and an explanation that he virtually no longer gives endorsements to anyone. The first endorsement was from Charles Ryrie. The first substantial book order came from a Southern Baptist Seminary in Uganda! Four classes a year continue to use the theology book to train African pastors. I am content to let God decide how He will distribute my Bible research. It would be just like God to do great things with it, but in a way that makes it clear to me that He alone is the One opening doors for ministry.

Friends of Washington Bible College/Capital Bible Seminary, we are saved by faith without works, but we work in faith. In our weakness and ignorance, we offer to God the sacrifice of our lives. He does as He wishes to His eternal glory. His Word, His own perfect character, and the privilege of exalting Him are the sources of satisfaction in life. Ministry size and ministry results are secondary. When they do occur, He obtains glory. WBC/CBS people are among the most dedicated "scholarly servants" anywhere.



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## A SHARPENED KNIFE CUTS WELL

*Dr. Josphat K. Yego (Kogo) (WBC '74)*

Professor, Eastern University

Devon, PA

AT A CRITICAL point in my senior year at Scott Theological College in Kenya, my advisor and I were discussing whether I should continue with my education or teach in our local Bible College. During this meeting, as the providence of God would have it, our library received a WBC catalog in the mail. To this day, I do not know who sent it. I reviewed this and other catalogs from several Bible Colleges and Seminaries.

After much prayer and consultation with my professors and the church leadership who consulted Africa Inland Mission, I applied to Washington Bible College. It was a big risk because I did not apply to any other Bible College, including those in England where my fellow pastors were applying. Upon graduation from Scott Theological College, the Africa Inland Church (AIC) posted me to teach at our local Bible College while waiting to be admitted to WBC.

I joined WBC on 27<sup>th</sup> August 1972. Like every international student, I had my share of cultural shocks, which started on my first day when a student came to pick me up to take me to the College. He said his name was Dull. I then asked, "Who was dull in your family...you or your father?"

He was pretty shocked. I told him that in my culture our names are based upon the weather, character, or the time of day that you are born. "My name means dawn and if yours is dull, someone must be dull in your family."

I quickly adjusted to the courses and the workload. True to my expectations, the courses were practical and prepared me for teaching and management. I enjoyed my Bible analysis courses, preaching, evangelism and Christian life courses. Sociology was difficult for me because everything was not only new, but also was based upon American life. My teachers were my biggest resource. Each teacher was unique, yet they all had one goal – to make me a better servant. It did not matter whether it was Christian life with Dr. Miller, Old Testament with Dr. Bishop,

Biblical Archeology with Dr. Heater, English with Miss Iris Maurer, Sociology with Mr. Poston, or Music Appreciation with Mr. Bos, the common theme was “becoming a better servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

It was not long before I enjoyed the fellowship of my colleagues in the Maintenance Department. Leroy Blevins taught me so many things during the two years that I worked there. President George Miles had a way of making “foreign students,” as we were called, feel a part of the family. Surely there were lonely days like Christmas vacation, but soon I found a place to call home in Martindale, PA. This really helped me in my stay in the USA.

After Washington Bible College I continued my theological training at Wheaton Graduate School. Following my training I went back to the same Bible College at which I had previously taught in my local village, teaching Christian doctrine, Bible Analysis, Homiletics and Communication. This is when I appreciated what I had learned at WBC. I was able to pass along the grounding in the Word that I had received to many others. The church was so happy with my theological stand, preaching, and my teaching that they have sent eight of my former students to WBC. Most of these have returned to Kenya to work in full-time Christian work, ranging from Deputy Principal, Head of Evangelism, Regional Education director to one heading the entire ministry of Family Life seminars for our country.

I went on to earn higher degrees from other Institutions, such as Bethel Seminary and Illinois State. Because of what I learned at WBC, I was able to stand and defend the biblical principles in classes such as Philosophy, Education Law, or Education policies. What I learned at WBC has helped to shape my life, my teaching and administration. God has used me in the area of Educational Management and has blessed me. After completing my doctoral work, I was able to serve as a dean of Daystar University, College Registrar of University of Nairobi, University Secretary of Kenyatta University and Deputy Principal of Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology. With the firm foundation I received in the Bible, I have been able to share and stand boldly.

I have learned that regardless of the level of service, the principles are the same and what is expected of us is to rightfully divide the Word. In my responsibilities as a teacher, chaplain, and director of a national airline accompanying our Head of State to the U.S White House or visiting other heads of state, knowing and living your stand is as important as preaching it.

Though each task may be different, such as working with abandoned children sponsored by Compassion International (which I did for two years), or working with the world's poor through World Vision (which I did for five years), the message is the same. In my current job of working with international students and scholars from over 40 different countries and cultures, it helps to know how to point them in the right direction—the Bible.

I am thankful to Washington Bible College for investing in me and to the teachers who shaped my life. Above all, I am thankful that God saved me and guided me to WBC, where I could be grounded in the Word.

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## EQUIPPED TO MINISTER TO THE VILLAGES OF INDIA

*Samuel Paulson (WBC '81)*  
Pioneers, India



RACHEL AND I Take this opportunity to wish President Heater, the Trustees, the faculty, the staff and the student body the Lord's blessings on this historic occasion of Centennial Celebrations. Thank you for the faithful ministry of WBC and CBS in preparing men and women to be a part in our Lord's Great Commission. We thank the Lord for using WBC and CBS as fertile preparation ground for sending the Gospel around the world.

I wish to share with you the blessings that Rachel, our three children, and I have received at WBC and CBS. Through various circumstances the Lord led me to WBC in 1976. After my graduation from WBC in 1981, the Lord led me to CBS where I studied for one year before my family and I returned to India. Even though Rachel did not attend WBC or CBS, she was instrumental in seeing me through my studies by her commitment and encouragement. The time we spent on the campus always reminds me of the dedication and the faithfulness of faculty, staff, and the student body. We cherish the memories of the time we spent at WBC and CBS.

It was here that the Lord gave us a vision for the lost people in India. The faculty, staff, and Student Missions Fellowship played an important role in strengthening our vision for India. Through the ministry of Dr. Miller, our missions professor, my wife and I were introduced to the mission board, Pioneers. In June of 1982 Rachel and I returned to India with our three children Paul, Susan and Timothy to serve the Lord. Upon our arrival to India we were overwhelmed to see the vastness of the task set before us. The Lord gave us tremendous opportunities to put our years of training at WBC and CBS into practice.

As the faithful prayers of dear friends continued to strengthen our lives, the Lord led us to seek the unreached people and to share the message of salvation with them. The Lord not only blessed our relationship with WBC and CBS over these years, but also gave us a special blessing as Rachel and I witnessed our eldest son Paul graduate from WBC in 1997, and our daughter Susan attend WBC during the same time. We praise the Lord for WBC and CBS for the impact it left on our lives.

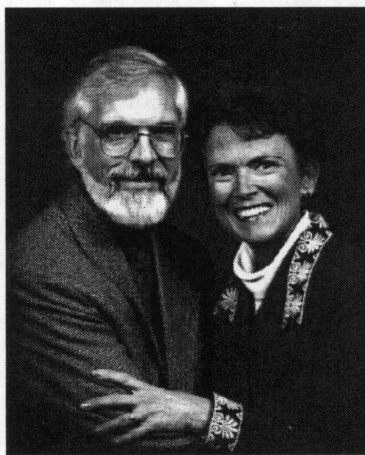
The Lord also fulfilled our life's dream of training national church planters in our own country in order to reach the unreached masses of India. We are now in our 20<sup>th</sup> year of ministry in India. As the head of the national missionary team in India for Pioneers, the Lord has given me the opportunity to disciple many believers and to encourage them for full-time ministry. With the prayers and support of dedicated and faithful friends, the Lord enabled us to develop a team of 240 faithful men and women and to plant over 300 congregations (small churches) in different parts of the country.

We thank the Lord for giving us the blessed opportunity to prepare our lives at WBC and CBS to be a part in the great harvest of our Lord, to see how the Lord continues to use WBC and CBS in touching the lives of people around the world, and to be a part in fulfilling the Great Commission. May the Lord richly bless you and continue to use you for His glory. We assure you of our continued prayers.

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## WBC AND MISSIONS

*Dr. Mike Pocock (WBC '64)*  
Chair, Missions Department  
Dallas Theological Seminary  
Dallas, TX



THIRTY-NINE YEARS have passed since my graduation from WBC, and thirty-eight since my studies at Capital Bible Seminary. The five years spent at the two schools laid the foundation for a lifetime of ministry that has included church establishment in North America, teaching for three years at Toccoa Falls Bible College, church planting and missions mobilization with The Evangelical Alliance Mission (TEAM), and, for the past fifteen years, seminary teaching at Dallas Theological Seminary. Service for the Lord has taken me to more than thirty-five countries, and my students are ministering on every continent. For all this, my wife Penny and

I thank the Lord and the solid grounding in His Word gained at WBC and CBS.

Both Penny and I had known the Lord only a year when we began within one year of each other at WBC. In my case, I was pretty raw! Though I was enthusiastic about serving the Lord, there was so much I did not know. My personal application lagged behind the little I did know. I praise God for the solid ministry of Fourth Presbyterian Church, in those years led by Richard Halvorsen. This ministry guided me from a practically delinquent status to a transforming experience with Christ. Based upon the recommendations of Margaret Proctor and Paul Kokulis, and other leaders in the Washington area, I went to WBC with a heart to learn God's Word.



WBC in the early sixties was small, but its location a few blocks from the White House placed it in a strategic position. Not only were we surrounded by the powerful but also by the powerless, both desperately needing the Lord. When John F. Kennedy was killed, I learned of that event while listening on my car radio. A few days later, we watched his funeral procession, which included dignitaries from Haile Selassie to Charles DeGaulle, enter St. Matthews Cathedral, just three blocks from WBC. George Miles had designed and printed a tract in the short space between Kennedy's death and funeral. Students passed them out across Washington, just as they had the Inauguration Day tracts he had designed two years before. It wasn't simply the Word that was taught at WBC, but a lifestyle of evangelism.

Some of us might have been timid about evangelism in those early days, but after doing tract distribution, preaching at the Gospel Mission, or ministering in the prisons of Virginia with fellow student Bill Simmer's fledgling Good News Mission, we became bold! We saw God change lives, and it imparted a lifelong excitement with evangelistic ministry. Mondays, President George Miles would lead chapel and many would share about weekend ministries. We always knew that we were not being sent out to do what professors themselves no longer did. Penny remembers the times on choir trips when George Miles would share the Gospel during a stop for gas, and the attendant would come to Christ. She remembers Wendell Johnston traveling with the choir as well, the warm counsel he would give to students, and the clear expository preaching that he modeled. We saw our leaders doing what they also inspired and taught us to do.

Class times were great! In fact you didn't need to take a class to be taught it! You could sit in the student lounge and hear Dr. MacCorkle expounding the Word in Christian Life, or Biblical Hermeneutics at the other end of the building. There are students who can remember the time he broke his watch when inadvertently punching the palm of his hand, in which he held his watch. Punching the palm of his hand was his characteristic gesture of emphasis! You didn't just get the content of the Word; you saw passion for the Word when you took classes at WBC.

Other professors were quieter, like Mr. Bishop; while others, like Dr. Mulholland were a notch louder, but they were just as clear. By the time you finished at WBC, you knew your theology and you understood your Bible. Church History and English Literature which young, yet effective teachers Homer Heater and Prof. Woodburn taught us fascinated me. Even though subjects like these were covered in High School at a lower level, it was at WBC that I began to see the interconnecting threads of history and the arts as they developed through the centuries.

Homer Heater was not yet through with his own studies at Capital Bible Seminary when he began to pastor Derwood Bible Church. We knew he and Pat practiced the calm and steady walk back then that has characterized them through their whole life together. If I had a personal crisis (and I have had some) Homer and Pat would be, and have been, the ones to whom I go first. They are never

anything less than rocks of stability, always ready with calm reassurance, biblical counseling, and sane advice.

My time at WBC was one of Christian social development. When I saw the relatively small number of students in those days, I decided right away that I would date girls from other campuses in the area! I could just imagine the girls sharing my “approach” with each other in the dorm! But it didn’t take more than two years to discover that the young women at WBC were godly and bent on service for the Lord.

Penny and I met at WBC, and were married the year she graduated. Washington D.C. is full of those romantic memories. What a thrill when our second son Torrey called one Saturday morning on his cell phone. “Dad,” he said, “where was it on the Tidal Basin that you proposed to Mom?”

“Where are you now?” I asked.

“Oh I’m walking from the Washington Monument and I think I’m going toward the Lincoln Memorial.”

“Well, take a left and walk at 90 degrees across Independence and you’ll see the Tidal Basin, walk down about 50 Cherry Trees, and that’s where it was.” Washington is full of memories, and so is WBC.

I went to college knowing God wanted me to be a missionary. I just wasn’t sure where. Young Doug Miller, also of Washington, had sold me on Irian Jaya, where he went himself and saw the whole Hatam tribe respond to Christ. My parents had always prayed for Afghanistan. The only missionary I knew while growing up in England, and he only by name, was Jack Ringer of the Afghan Border Crusade. Maybe it would be Afghanistan?

But as I read those books from Latin America, *Through Gates of Splendor* and *In the Shadow of the Almighty*, required reading by Professor Wright, a new sense of direction emerged. Those books were so absorbing that I rationed them out half a chapter a night to make them last longer. They were that compelling! God reinforced and informed my missionary vision while at WBC, and eventually Penny and I served in Venezuela with TEAM.

After an exciting first year of seminary at Capital, I transferred to Trinity Evangelical Divinity School. I didn’t have anything against Capital, but I thought we might serve with the Evangelical Free Church. Again my grounding at WBC and CBS paid off. I went through Trinity taking advanced courses in practically every area, because the foundation was already laid. It was good that I had a background in pre-millennial and dispensational theology.

One day a fellow student at Trinity with a background in engineering asked me in an Eschatology class, “Mike, what does ‘pre-tribulational’ mean?” I gave him as short an answer as the moment allowed. “Jesus can come at any moment, and it’ll be before the Tribulation,” I whispered under my breath. That student went on to ministry with Wycliffe Bible Translators. He’s completed the translation of an

entire Bible in a tribal language. Knowing God's Word is essential, and so is sound theology. I may not have transformed my classmate's life by my answer, but the answer I had was one of so many gleaned at WBC and CBS.

On a more serious level, I recall a woman who responded to an invitation after a message delivered in war-torn Bogota, Colombia. With tears in her eyes, she said: "Don Miguel, tell me something about heaven." She was in anguish.

"What's happened?" I asked.

"They have killed my son. He was an airforce helicopter pilot. Guerillas shot down the helicopter when it was attacking their drug lab in the jungle, and I don't even have a piece of him to bury. Will I see him again?" Her son was the same age as my oldest son, Alan, at that time. I gave her a hug. We wept together, and then turned to the promises of 1 Corinthians 15, and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18. Some may think that eschatology is irrelevant, but it's not when you have to answer those heart-wrenching questions about what the future holds. I learned what Scripture says, and how to comfort the saints and challenge the lost at Washington Bible College.

Having a life partner with similar basic training has been a wonderful blessing. Penny has had the prayer life and wife life conditioned by truths learned at WBC. Armed with her education degree from WBC (to which she has added at Northern Illinois University) Penny has taught at Toccoa Falls College, put together the Christian Education department of the church we founded in Venezuela, and taught in three elementary schools.

She also served as the Principal of Casa View Baptist School, where the Lord used her to grow it from Kindergarten and two grades to a full, thriving elementary school. This school drew students and families from every ethnic group in the area to the church. She has always sought to make the Bible the heart of the formation her children are getting. She has always put into practice the motto of WBC. It is ever before me; engraved on the school ring she bought me as an engagement present; "The Bible in the Heart – the Heart of Service."

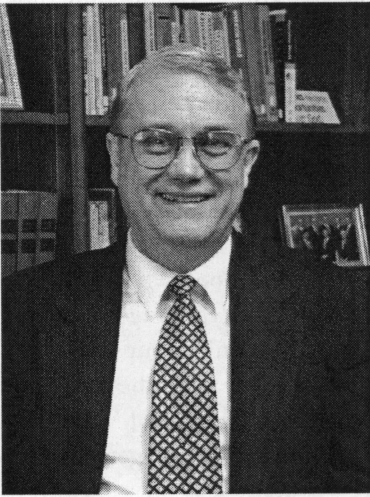
We both cherish our heritage, which God has used to bring us where we are, doing things that are so significant. We never dreamed we would have had the opportunity to do them. It is beyond my wildest dreams that I would one day teach at the school from which Dean MacCorkle and Dr. Mulholland graduated, or where Charlie Dyer, Homer Heater, and Rick Taylor have taught, all of them connected in their formative years with WBC and CBS. Praise God for what He has done, and for yet greater things in the years to come!

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## JOURNEY TO A MEANINGFUL LIFE

*Dr. George Harton*

Academic Dean, Capital Bible Seminary  
Lanham, MD



“YOUR SON WANTS to become a minister? Where did that come from?” My father was too embarrassed to explain to his fellow directors at the bank that his son was not going to follow his steps. My grandmother, Pat, was more direct in challenging my faith.

“What do you mean, ‘The Lord will provide?’ You mean *I* will provide!” Having paid for my private school education in High School and College, she made it very clear that she would not pay for any religious education. She could not understand my response that God would provide.

I quickly discovered that becoming a Christian did not mean having trouble-free relationships or a “rose-strewn pathway” through life. But I would not have it any other way. Experiencing new heights of joy and depths of pain, I felt as though I was really beginning to live.

In the years following the end of WWII, life for our family saw the best of times and the worst of times. The end of hostilities in the War led to an escalation of hostility at home. When I was just two years old and my sister, Janet, was three years old, our mother fled to New York City to escape the suburban life of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Our dad could not care for us alone, so he hired childcare providers. The first few made matters worse. Then Maria came to live with us. Now this was a perfect fit! While Maria made sure that we did our homework, she also made sure we had

fun, taking us to ice skating lessons, swimming, skiing, and even for simple walks in the woods. Life was very good.

I then became involved in some religious activity. A friend invited me to join the boys' choir at a local mainline Protestant church. The need for another singer got me to the church, but the duck pin bowling alleys in the basement kept me coming back. Prior to this, no one in our family had regularly attended church. Maria was a nominal Catholic, and my dad was a nominal Presbyterian. Church became another fun thing to "do."

When we moved to a new neighborhood, I, now a teenager, tried out a church within walking distance in order to make some new friends. This plan was working well until the Sunday morning I overslept and did not show up for my part in the opening exercises at Sunday school. I was so overcome with embarrassment that I never went back. It wasn't so bad because I had plenty of friends at school, and life was full without church or God.

Going off to college meant even more of the same. Princeton turned out to be more like a country club than a rigorous academic institution. Singing in the glee club, performing in a production of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Yeoman of the Guard*, and playing Monopoly all night at the eating club made the first few years of college a hedonist's delight!

Then a fellow Glee Club member invited me to a Bible study on campus. This invitation led to the discovery that I did not have a Bible of my own. I later recalled that the Gideons had given me a New Testament in high school and that my boys' choir director had given me one in fourth grade. However, I had never even opened them.

I did not attend the Bible study on Romans chapter 12 because I felt I did not have an hour to go to the library and read a 20 or 30 page chapter. When I explained this to Wayne, my Glee Club friend, he showed me that a chapter in the Bible was only one or two pages long. What an embarrassing revelation!

Another acquaintance asked me what I believed about God. Frankly, I had to admit that I had never really given God much thought. I explained to this friend that I pictured God as a far away, detached person who let the world run itself. It intrigued me to hear Christians talk about having a "personal relationship" with God. Listening to these Christians pray for specific requests, like asking God to provide a parking space when none seemed available, caused me to wonder if I was missing out on something important.

As I talked with Christian students and learned biblical truth, I began to realize that, according to the Bible, I was not a Christian. I learned that the Bible portrays all people as separated from God by sin. No one had to convince me that I was a sinner. I certainly knew that I did not live up to my own standards, let alone those of a holy God!



The truth slowly began to sink in, and I started to understand this life-changing concept. I began to understand that not only did God send His only Son into the world to reveal Himself, but also to provide a way for people to have their sins forgiven. Through the forgiveness of our sins, we could establish a personal relationship with God.

However, as I heard all of this, I found it interesting, but not captivating. After all, I was not looking for God. It seemed that God was looking for me, but I was agnostic as to whether any of this was true. I attended several of the Bible studies and accepted an invitation of the teacher, Donald Fullerton (Princeton alumnus class of 1913), to have dinner at his home. He took the opportunity to explain the good news of the Bible that God had sent Jesus Christ into the world to seek and save (become their personal Savior and Lord) the lost (those who did not have a personal relationship with Him.)

After taking the time to explain the central message of the Bible to me, Don Fullerton was satisfied that I knew enough to pray and ask God to start a personal relationship with me. But each time I walked away without doing so because I was not looking to be saved. Furthermore, I would not discuss heaven or hell with the Christians I knew, because no one could prove that these places existed.

Then one evening while I was trying to write a paper on the political history of nineteenth century Germany, I overheard my suitemates having a discussion in the living room about friends. They all agreed that good, genuine friendship was rare.

"Right," I thought. "I don't have any good friends, in fact I don't even have any enemies. My life is like Germany was in the nineteenth century, just a bunch of city states with no central government."

Overhearing this conversation, I became painfully aware that my life was meaningless. I was enrolled at Princeton because my dad had studied there, not because I had any great aspirations or personal reasons for being here. Like a chameleon, I adapted to people around me to get along, but had no purpose in life as a platform on which to build close friendships.

I suddenly saw how empty and superficial my life had been up to that point. Having to choose a major that semester intensified the awareness. Having fun is momentarily joyous and exciting, but what do you have when the laughter fades away? Without a guiding direction, life is aimless.

Now God had gotten my attention. What if the Bible were true? What if God really were revealing Himself to mankind in Christ? In God's perfect time, Dr. Fullerton showed me Psalm 22. He made it clear that this Psalm, written by King David of Israel around 1000 BC, was a perfect prophetic picture of the crucifixion of Jesus. But crucifixion as a means of capital punishment did not exist for the Jews. This was a Roman innovation centuries later!

Maybe Jesus could have tried to make himself Messiah by quoting from this psalm ("My God, my God why have you forsaken me"). But the Roman soldiers



who gambled for Jesus' garment at the foot of the cross would not have known about this prophecy, much less had any reason to fulfill it.

That night I realized that it was more reasonable to believe that God had revealed Himself in the Bible and in Christ than to believe any other explanation. There *is* a personal God, who made and fulfilled predictions about Jesus Christ! (I have since learned that there are over 300 predictions, or prophecies, about Jesus in the Old Testament that He fulfilled in the New Testament. A statistician calculated that the mathematical probability of someone fulfilling even seven prophecies would be most unlikely. The chance of this happening would equate to covering Texas with a layer of quarters three feet deep, marking one with an "X" and then turning it over, and having someone pick the marked quarter up on the first try. Yet, Christ fulfilled over 300!) I went back to my dorm room and, finding it vacant knelt down and prayed a simple prayer to receive Jesus Christ as my personal Lord and Savior.

Shortly thereafter I made a commitment to read at least one verse from the Bible each day. As I read the Bible each day my faith began to grow. Four years later I was amazed to discover that the girl whom I met and later married had been praying for me to receive the gift of eternal life. Ellen had attended a church that faithfully preached the good news about Jesus Christ. When she was nine years old, she prayed that same prayer and since then has never doubted that she has eternal life. As a young teen, Ellen set her sights on having a husband who would be the spiritual leader in their home. As it occurred to her that her future husband might not yet be a Christian, she began asking God to save this man, whoever and wherever he was. God heard her prayers and in His grace and mercy sought a young college student who was not seeking Him, and gave him the gift of eternal life.

We have now been married for over thirty years and rejoice that our four children all have strong relationships with God. We have also rejoiced in God's grace that took me, who knew nothing of the Bible or Christ for the first twenty years of his life, and transformed me into a Professor of Bible and current Academic Dean of Capital Bible Seminary. Every member of the faculty and staff at Washington Bible College and Capital Bible Seminary is an example of God's grace.

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Well, that's my story. Or rather, this is the story of what God has done in my life. I have shared this to thank God for how He has blessed my life. There is a second reason that I have shared my story with you.

Consider this...perhaps the reason that you are reading this is no mere accident, but in fact a divine appointment. Let me assure you that God is actively pursuing a personal relationship with *you*. No matter what you think of yourself, God views you as special and wants you to know Him.

As you have been reading this, you may be feeling the same thoughts that I had expressed earlier, that God is distant. Perhaps you may doubt He even exists at all, or may think He is a “crutch” for weak people. That’s all right...for many people have felt the same way and have had the same doubts about God that you have.

From my testimony, the story of what God has done for me and in the life of my family, you can see that God is real. Read the other testimonies in this book and you will see the same thing. Being in a close and intimate relationship with God, strange and uncertain as that may sound, is the only thing that gets us through each and every day. It is what gives purpose and meaning to life, and I speak from personal experience.

The greatest gift I could possibly give you is the peace that comes from knowing, truly knowing, God. It is so simple to do. Let me tell you how you can right now, if you so desire, find peace and meaning in life. It is done through praying a simple prayer. Many people pray this prayer daily, and their lives are changed forever. You do not have to say it verbatim, do not have to say it aloud, and do not have to be in church to pray it. All that is important is that you are sincere and truly desire to know God personally.

If you would like to know God personally, and have assurance that from this moment forward, and throughout all eternity, that you will be with the Lord, then you may pray the simple prayer that follows. Here’s a sample prayer you could pray:

*Jesus, I acknowledge that I am a sinner, and that on my own I can not get to heaven. I know that You died on the cross for my sins, and have paid the price for me to enter Heaven. I accept You as my personal Savior, and ask You into my life. Lead me, and direct my life. Amen*

If you did pray this prayer, afterwards seek out another Christian and share this with them. They will pray with you, and help you to begin to understand what it means to live as a Christian. If you don’t have anyone to share your new decision with, I’d be delighted to hear from you myself. May God richly bless, guide, and direct you in your new path.

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## PART FOUR: EPILOGUE

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### THE FUTURE OF WASHINGTON BIBLE COLLEGE/ CAPITAL BIBLE SEMINARY

*by Dr. Homer Heater, Jr. (WBC '59, CBS '64)*

*President*

Washington Bible College/Capital Bible Seminary  
Lanham, MD



I BEGAN TAKING WBC classes at night in 1954. I was one of the first students in the new Seminary program in 1958. Except for an eight-year hiatus while teaching at Dallas Theological Seminary, I have spent almost 50 years in some connection with these schools. Consequently, I speak both as President and as one whose life has been intertwined with a Bible college and a Bible seminary.

The "Bible college movement" is a recent phenomenon in church history. The earliest schools such as Moody Bible Institute, the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, and Nyack, to name a few, only go back to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Our school is part of that movement that sought to train lay people to

be better Sunday school teachers, youth workers, and children's club instructors.

With the advent of the “fundamentalist/modernistic” controversy of the first part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Bible College movement became even more significant. Now Bible college (usually institute) graduates became pastors and missionaries. After World War II, soldiers, sailors, and marines came home with an awareness of the needs of the world hitherto unknown. They became missionaries, established Bible colleges, and in many ways made an impact upon the church.

As the Bible College movement grew, it became more sophisticated. Its professors began to acquire academic credentials. Many schools, like ours, developed seminaries to provide further education and skills to its graduates. The movement that was begun by intelligent and godly, but often untrained leaders now began to provide an intellectual climate for its students. At the same time, the Bible College movement maintained its devotion to the Scriptures as the inerrant Word of God and a commitment to missions and full-time Christian work.

Historically, it has been difficult to maintain a balance between intellectual inquiry and commitment to the Scriptures, evangelism, and missions. Throughout church history there has been a dialectic of thesis (conservative commitment), antithesis (movement toward intellectualism) and synthesis (a new thesis). This brings us to the questions: “What is the future of the Bible College movement,” and “What is the future of Washington Bible College and Capital Bible Seminary?”

The events of 9/11/01 were a wakeup call to the church. People began to ask, “Is having a portfolio, successful job, and international vacations what life is all about?” Since the answer to that question is a resounding “No,” then the next question is “What is?” I believe that young people are beginning to search for meaning and significance in life in a new way.

Furthermore, I believe that many young people will seek to please and serve God. The question we must ask is “What is the role of the Bible College and Seminary in that future?” I am convinced that we have a significant role to play in the next few decades as the Church confronts an entirely different society. We can continue to educate, disciple, and equip men and women to be “World Changers” only if we are willing to face certain realities.

**Excellence of education.** The United States has more opportunities for education than ever before, but the quality is declining. When John Adams went to Harvard at the age of 16, he already knew Greek, Latin, History and Literature. Today, most college graduates do not know any of those. Unbelievably, many can barely read or write. The Bible College movement must come of age and fill the gap in the area of education.

Washington Bible College is striving for excellence and is showing that partially by the accreditation it receives. Our Seminary is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools, our College by the Accrediting Association of Bible Colleges, and we are candidates with the regional accrediting association (MSA).

We must always walk the fine line between academic excellence and simple faith, but we must walk it. To make a significant impact on our fast changing society both the College and Seminary must stress the ability to analyze, think, and come to logical conclusions.

**Post modern age.** There are many good things to be said about post-modernity. The most important one is that it has rejected the concept that science has the answer to everything. It is also looking for personal authentication and a sense of spirituality. The difficulty is that the base of authority tends to reside in the individual rather than in an objective body of truth. Consequently, we in the educational world must not bury our heads in the sand, but seek to interface with the new way of thinking in such a way as to woo people to the knowledge of Christ and confidence in His revealed word. We can do this, but we must consciously make it part of our *modus operandi*.

**Discipleship and mentoring.** The turbulent period of the sixties spawned a generation of people who rejected authority, rebelled against their parents and all they stood for, practiced “free love,” and were generally lacking in self-discipline. As that generation grew up, they brought much of that dysfunctionality with them and passed it on to their children. Now three generations later, we are receiving young people at our College and Seminary who are missing some of the most basic skills about what Proverbs calls “wisdom” living.

The old legalism that characterized so many Bible colleges in the past just won’t work. We must provide models as well as mentoring in our faculty and staff. We must show our students how to be mature, make good decisions, and live the Christian life. We must promote Christian liberty in the biblical sense: we are free in Christ to obey God’s Word.

**Multicultural awareness.** Multiculturalism is a buzzword that has become part of political correctness. However, we should recognize that the Body of Christ is made up of all kinds of people. Paul confronted this in Galatians 3:28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female: for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

Our society is not monolithic. It has never been, but we once were able to move in large circles of our own kind without mixing with those who were different. That is no longer true. We are part of a larger ethnic, religious, and social pool. We cannot and must not ignore that fact. The Church ought to mirror the Body of Christ in acknowledgement and acceptance of other cultures that have come to know Christ.

The world has shrunk. We now have news from around the world seconds after it occurs. Our motto is that we “equip world-changers to think biblically, focus globally, and serve God effectively.” We must truly focus globally. This means becoming aware of who the peoples of the world are, where they live, what they believe, and how we can reach them with the Gospel. It also means opening our

homes and dorms to international students so that they can be equipped to return to their own people for ministry.

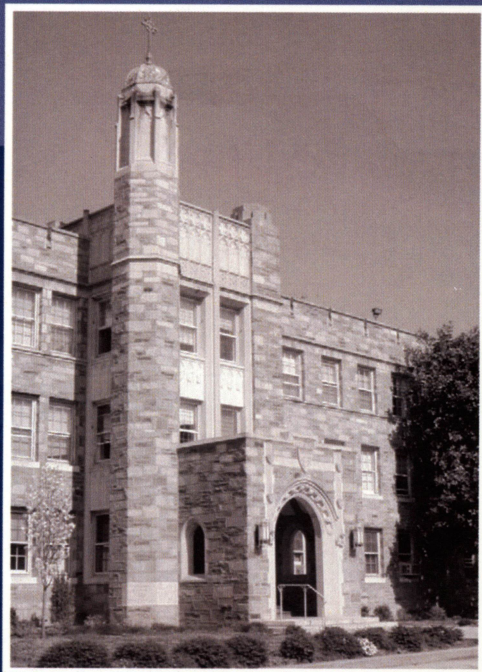
**Knowledge of other religions.** This brings me to the final area we must address—getting to know the other religions. There are two Hindu temples, a Moslem study center, and a Jehovah's Witness worship center located just a mile from campus. We also have Jewish synagogues a few more miles away. Ignorance breeds avoidance, so our job is to equip our students to be informed and prepared so that they will feel comfortable interacting with people of different religions.

We must read their sacred texts to understand what they teach. Then we must learn to love them, have them in our homes, have our children play with their children, and share our faith with them. I asked a dear friend of mine who grew up as a Muslim how he had come to know the Lord. He said, "A former missionary to Iran took me into his home when I was an international student and loved me to the Lord." That is the way—it is Christ's way.

I am convinced that if we heed these issues that Washington Bible College and Capital Bible Seminary will both play a vital role in what God does in the next decades. I look forward to the impact these schools will continue to make in proclaiming the Gospel to a lost and dying world.



*A* history of Washington Bible College/Capital Bible Seminary from its inception to present with an emphasis on the longest serving president, G.A. Miles. Includes essays on biblical topics by faculty and testimonies of alumni of the schools.



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